ALL ABOUT HISTORY

BOOK OF WAR

1847-1938

VOLUME 1

★ A YEAR-BY-YEAR GUIDE TO THE EVOLUTION OF WARFARE ★

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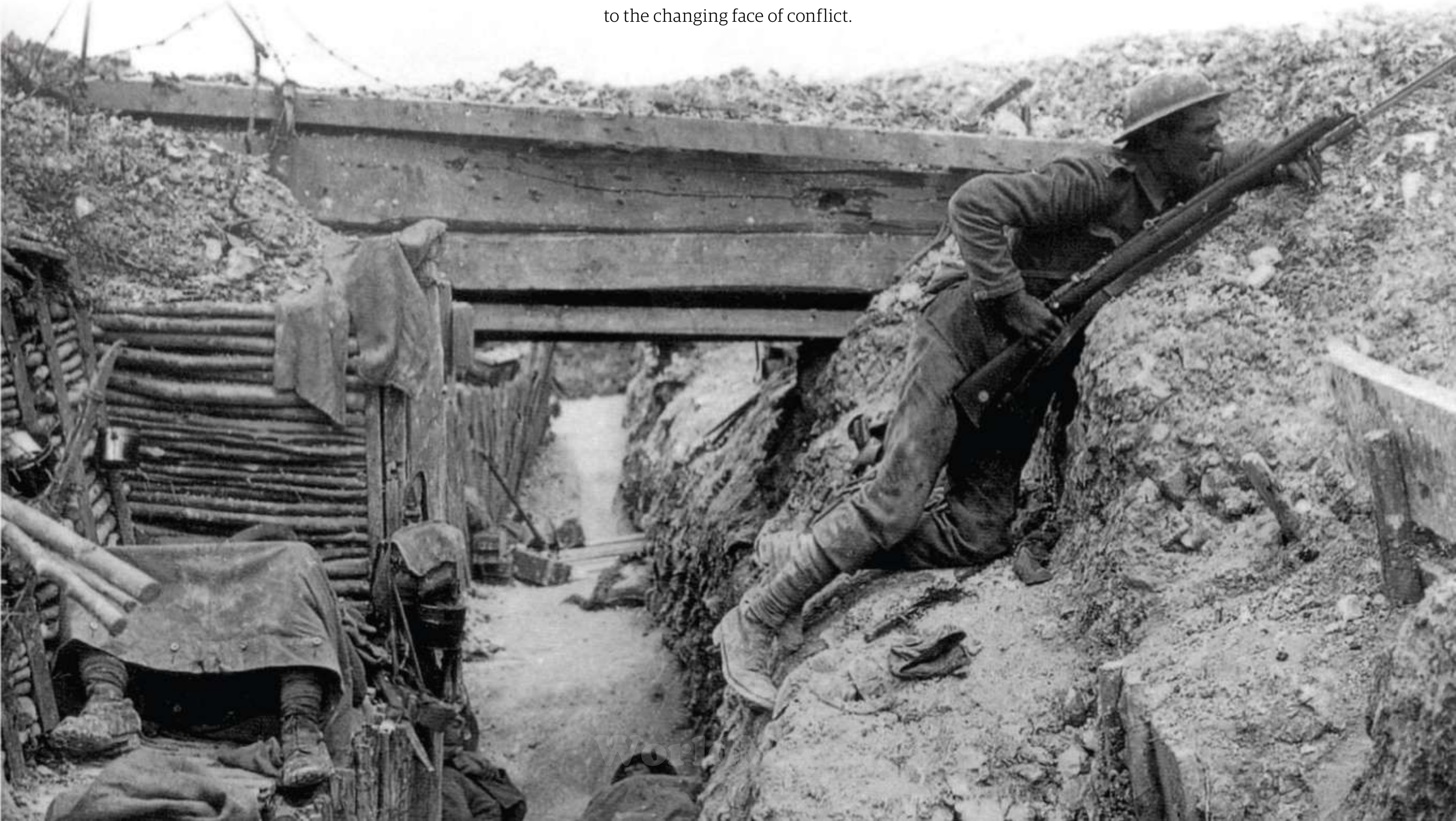
John F. Kennedy once stated that "mankind must put an end to war - before war puts an end to mankind." Armed conflict can be traced back hundreds of years, and as time has passed, the weapons and tactics used have become more advanced, and more deadly. In this first volume of The Book of War, we take an in-depth look at some of the battles and crusades that shaped the world between 1847-1938. From the Crimean War and the American Civil War through to the First World War and Spanish Civil War, see how the art of war developed and evolved. Structured to give you newspaper-style recordings of the key events year-by-year, read the unbiased reports and discover more about the individuals who played a major role in influencing the outcome of battles. Packed with incredible illustrations and images, The Book of War is a comprehensive guide to the changing face of conflict.



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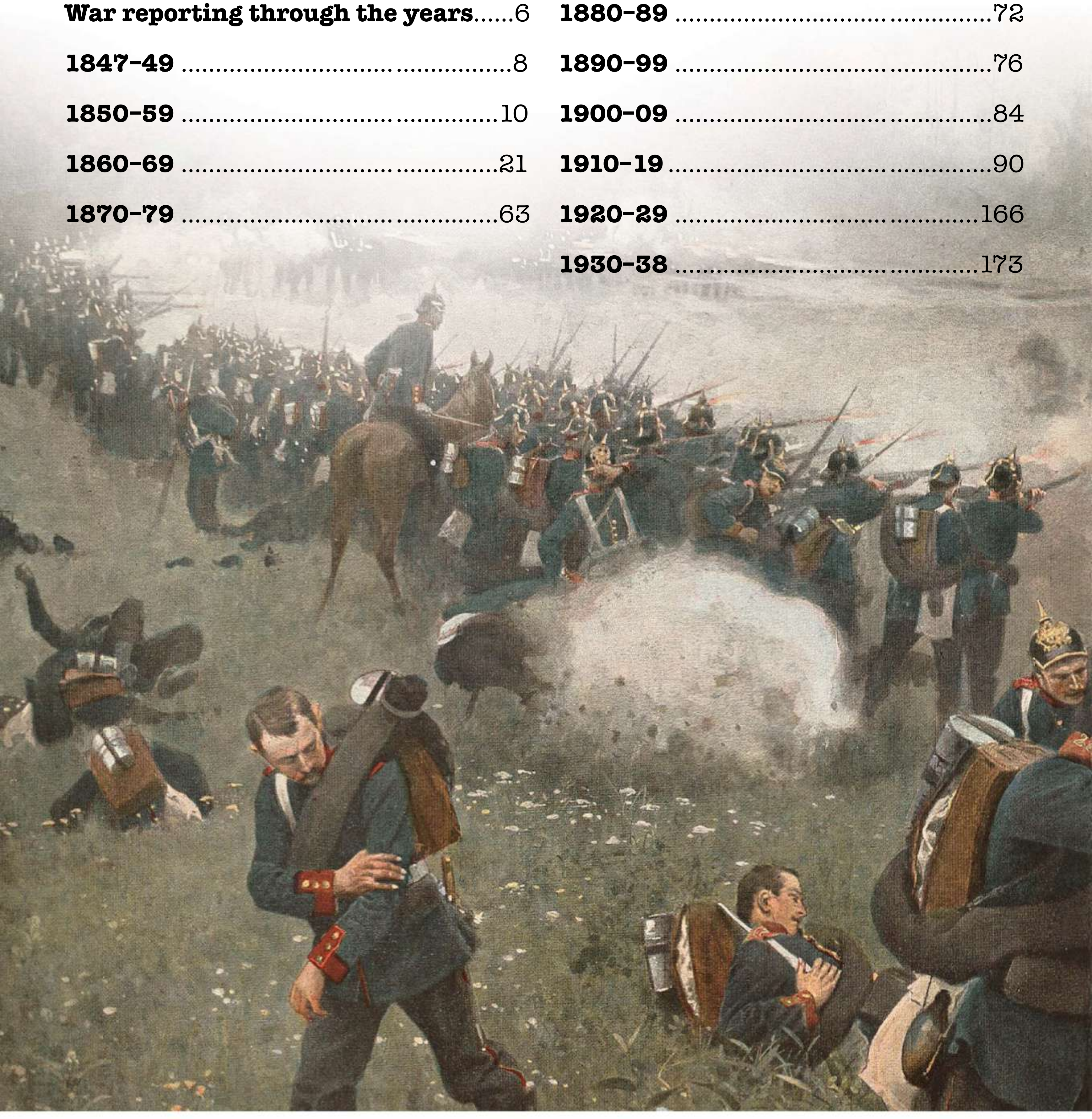
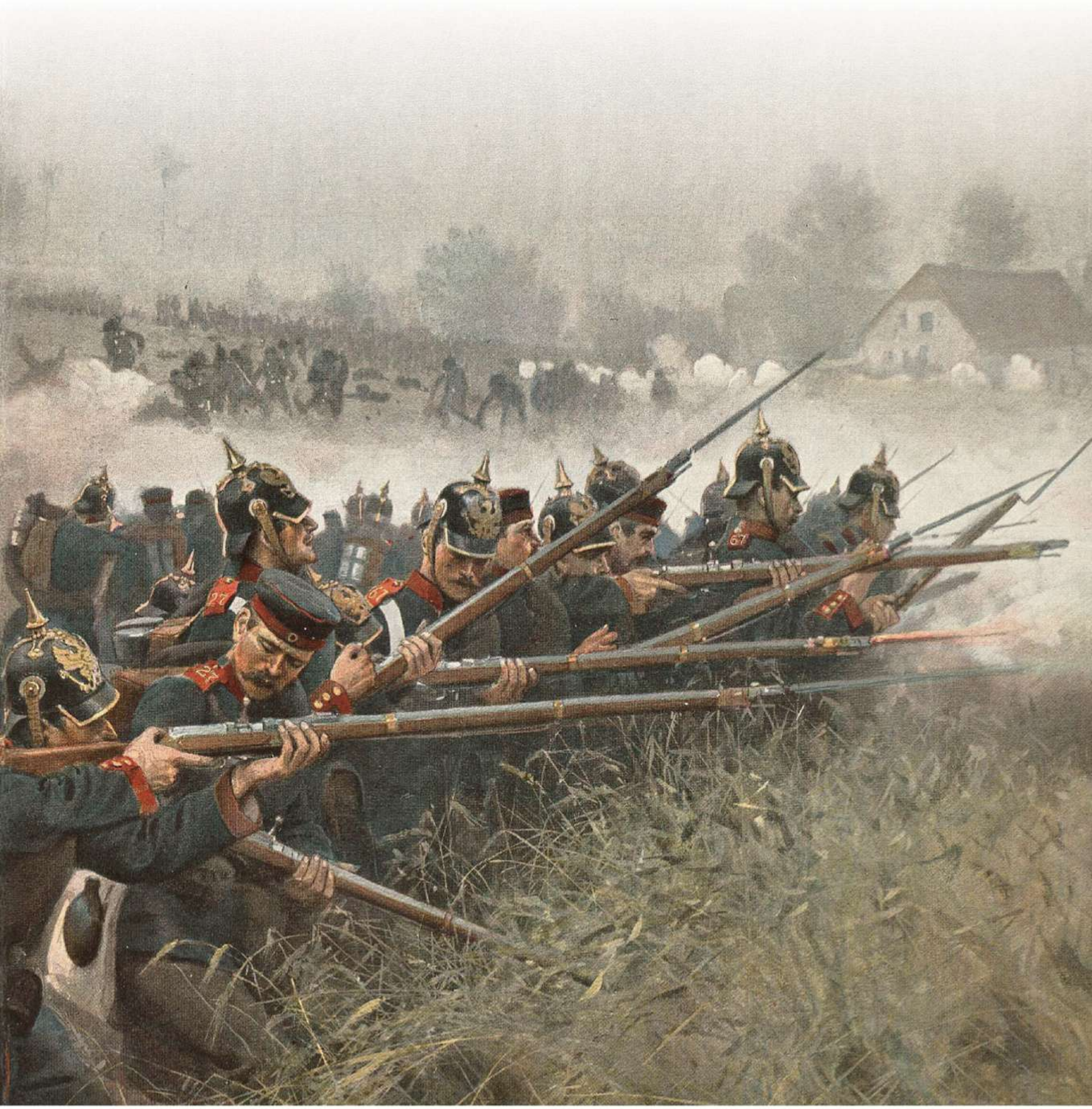




War reporting through the years

Stories of wars have been reported going back to the dawn of history. The war correspondent, as a chronicler of the events of a conflict as they happen, is largely a creation of the rise of newspapers during the nineteenth century.

PHOTOGRAPHIC
VAN

Roger Fenton used this mobile dark room to develop his images from the Crimean War.

At first, news of wars was collected somewhat haphazardly. Often, the newspapers simply repeated the dispatches from the armies in the field as received and published in official government sources. Occasionally, such as during the Napoleonic Wars (1803-15), officers participating in the campaigns would send letters to editors describing what they had seen. There were also reports written by people who did not necessarily accompany the armies, but spoke to participants or collated information from local newspapers.

In the 1830s, Charles Lewis Gruneisen wrote battlefield reports for the London-based Morning Post on a civil war fought in Spain. In some respects he was the earliest war correspondent, although he did not continue in this work, instead becoming a music critic. George W. Kendall, editor of the New Orleans Picayune, also had some claim to being a war correspondent. He accompanied US armies during the war in Mexico, although he had some difficulty separating himself from the conflict. He was an early advocate of the annexation of Texas by the United States, and fought with a Texan unit against the Mexican army in the opening campaigns of the war, as well as accompanying the main American military force during its campaign to capture the capital, Mexico City.

Traditionally, the title of "the first war correspondent" is awarded to William Howard Russell, commissioned by The Times of London to accompany the allied armies during the Crimean War.

Russell had been working for the The Times since 1841, and effectively established the basic principles of war reporting for those who would follow in his footsteps. He was present at battles, and described both the broad outline of an engagement and also the sense of battle as experienced by those participating in the actual fighting. He gathered his information by questioning those who were willing to speak to him - officers and other ranks alike. His dispatches proved immensely popular, and also were an effective tool for enabling politicians to tackle the aristocratic incompetence that severely hampered the efforts of the British army in the campaign. He became a full-time journalist, a published author and developed a second career as a sought-after lecturer.

However, Russell's success also highlighted the failings of the war correspondent. The Crimea was only one theatre of the war and not the most important one. His depiction of an incompetent officer class damning its men to avoidable misery and failing to offer them the kind of leadership needed to win battles through effective tactics, guaranteed the enduring view of that war as one of British military mismanagement. In fact, while the army floundered in the Crimea, the Royal Navy fought a two-year campaign of considerable innovation in the Baltic that effectively defeated Russia.

While Russell established the operating practice of war correspondents, photographers also made some steps during the Crimean War towards creating a photojournalism of war. At first, war photography was hampered by the unwieldy equipment that was mid-nineteenth-century technology. Nonetheless, Roger Fenton, James Robertson and Charles Langlois all took pictures that offered those who saw them a glimpse of what a real war looked like. Subsequently, Felice Beato took some dramatic images of the aftermath of battles in India and China during the Mutiny and the Second Opium War.

In spite of these pioneering efforts, the real breakthrough for war photography came in the American Civil War. Numerous photographers accompanied the Union armies and Matthew Brady in particular created a shock with his exhibition of "The Dead of Antietam". At the time, American papers listed names of those killed in battle, but the exhibition, in New York, made a terrific impact. These were silhouettes that represented the names, in all the ghastly postures of the dead who had lain in the open for some hours or even days after they had perished. War photography needed to capture a visual reality of war, not simply be restricted

Sir William Howard Russell, war correspondent of The Times.

US and British troops and journalists take shelter in trenches in the Kuwait desert, 2003.

to images of uniformed men beside tents or cooking in the open as if they were some kind of reunion jamboree of former boy scouts.

Such was the impact of dispatches by Russell or exhibitions organized by Brady, that generals were quickly aware of the need to control the work of war reporting. In the closing days of the Crimean War, the British commander-in-chief ordered the expulsion of any correspondent who disclosed military secrets. What was deemed secret was left up to the soldiers to determine. Brady was criticized for damaging the morale of citizens who paid for the war through taxes and by offering up their kin to meet the same fate as the Dead of Antietam. War correspondents and photographers, however, were still able to go about their work.

The nature of war correspondents' work has remained much the same, even though printing, radio, television and computers have brought new technologies to deploy on the reporting of war. The development of printing methods that could reproduce photographs created the picture newspaper, and opened up photography to a wider audience than could attend an exhibition in a gallery. Film stunned viewers when they saw Geoffrey Malins's and John McDowell's documentary The Battle of the Somme. Edward R. Murrow enabled listeners in the United States to hear the sound of bombs falling on London. The nightly news in 1960s America delivered pictures of the conflict in Vietnam direct to American homes. Today, war-blogs are written by individuals actively involved in the American occupation of Iraq, and allow internet surfers to get first-hand accounts of what is going on there, almost immediately. During the invasion, reporters were able to use wireless computer technology to submit reports "live from the front".

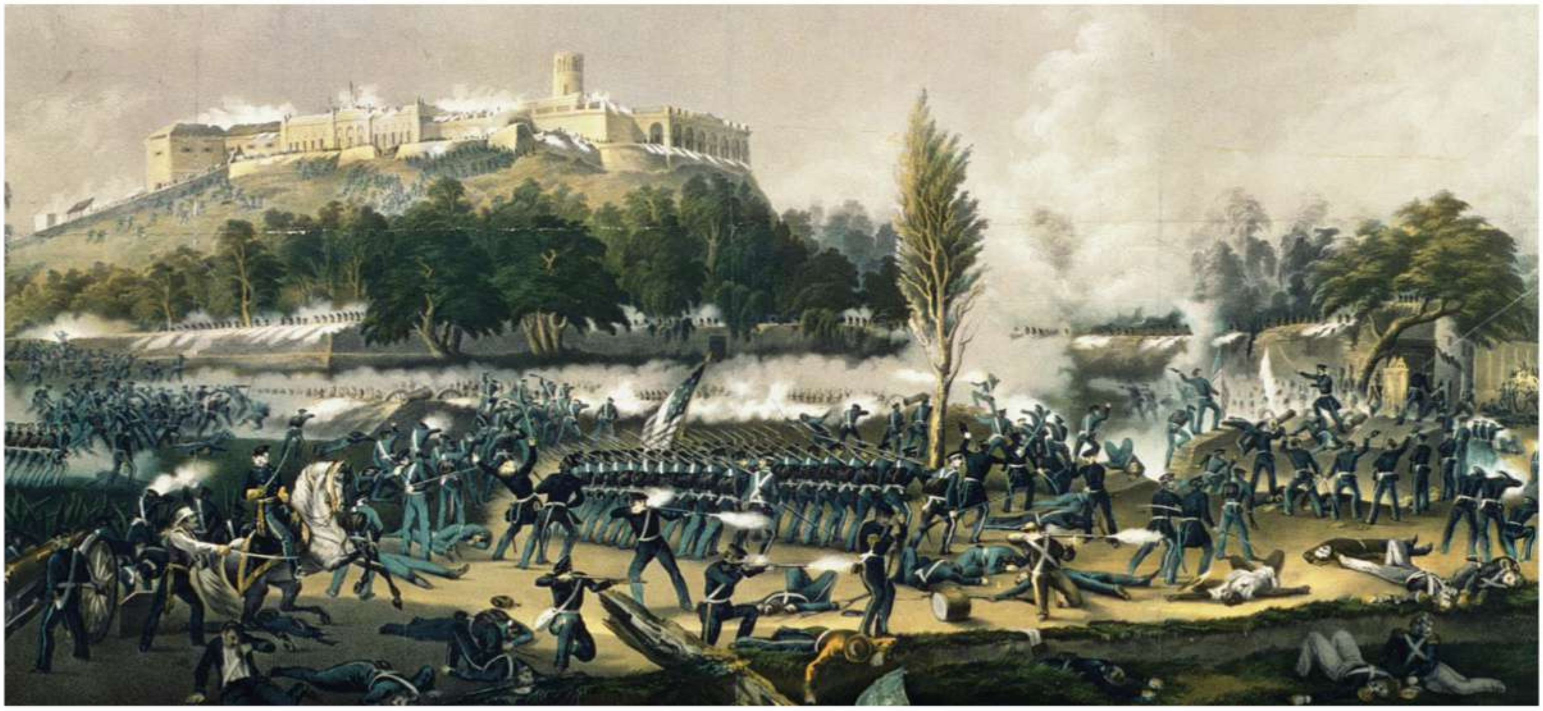
The effect of all this information has led to widespread censorship and to a certain degree of manipulation by armed forces. A popular American correspondent of the Second World War was Ernie Pyle, who attained folkloric status as he reported in homey Middle American tones about the lives, and occasionally the deaths, of the men in the field. Pyle made a point of referring to a soldier's home town and state when he mentioned them, which of course drew the locality's residents into the war in a subtle way, and encouraged the home front in the war effort.

Rather more amazingly was the work of Peter Arnett during the Gulf War. Arnett had come to fame as a war correspondent during the Vietnam War and his presence in Baghdad throughout the bombing illustrated how the global audience was targeted by the Iraqi government through the means of an enemy alien. This incredible use of the enemy's media against itself continued during the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. War correspondents have gone from being regarded as spies – Gruneison was nearly executed – to being an important part of a state's propaganda campaign.

The Book of War attempts to strip away the manipulation and propaganda provided by mere reprints of wartime press reports, while retaining the immediacy and the context that a daily newspaper published in wartime might reveal. It is this context that is often lost on armchair theorists: for example, given the bad situation confronting the Confederacy in mid-1863, even a victory by Lee's army at Gettysburg may have accomplished little more than extending the war by a few weeks.

In this spirit, I hope that The Book of War will help the reader toward a better understanding of the "whys" of naval and military history in general.

Paul Brewer



On 13 September 1847 the castle of Chapultepec to the west of Mexico City was stormed by American forces, leading to the fall of the Mexican capital. Chapultepec's capture opened the way to American assaults to the north-west and west of the city.

Halls of Montezuma fall to US troops in conquest of Mexico City

On 13 September 1847, a US army commanded by General Winfield Scott successfully stormed the Mexican defences to the west of Mexico City. The Mexican capital fell at dawn on 14 September.

The key to the Mexican defences facing the Americans was the castle of Chapultepec, which housed the country's military academy and stood on top of a hill that reached some 200 feet (61 m) above the surrounding terrain.

The Americans launched a three-pronged assault on the position. The first regiment to assault the walls was forced to hold its position for some time while waiting for scaling ladders to allow them to ascend. The 9th, reinforced by two additional regiments from the Volunteer Division of the American army, and the arrival of the scaling ladders, finally captured Chapultepec at around 9.30 a.m. When the Stars and Stripes appeared in place of the Mexican tricolour over the walls of Chapultepec, the commander of the Mexican army, General Antonio López de Santa Anna commented, "If we were to plant our batteries in Hell the damned Yankees would take them."

General Scott's plan of attack assumed that after the fall of Chapultepec, fresh troops would push north then west to enter the city, while the Volunteer Division would make a feint attack directly west toward the Garita de Belén. General John A. Quitman, however, pushed his attack home, at heavy cost to both his men and his staff. The Garita de Belén fell, but not the main barracks for the Mexican garrison of the city, the Ciudadela, overlooked it and prevented any further advance.

Scott's main assault, regular army troops under Brigadier General William Worth, successfully captured the Garita de San Cosme. The Mexicans had not expected the Americans to attack here and only makeshift sandbag defences were set up hurriedly after the fall of Chapultepec. These did not delay the American attackers' advance for long, and at nightfall the Garita de San Cosme was captured; American soldiers set up camp in the Alameda, a great park on the western edge of the city itself.

The city government did not want a house-to-house defence of the capital, and requested Santa Anna to leave. He respected their wishes and withdrew to Guadalupe Hidalgo, leaving Scott and his men to occupy the city the next day.

The battle was witnessed by one of the earliest recorded war correspondents, George W. Kendall, founder and editor of the New Orleans Picayune.

MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR

DATES:	1846-48
COMBATANTS:	United States of America vs Mexico
FORCES ENGAGED:	USA, 60,000; Mexico, 40,000
CASUALTIES:	USA, 17,435; Mexico, 25,000
RESULT:	US victory

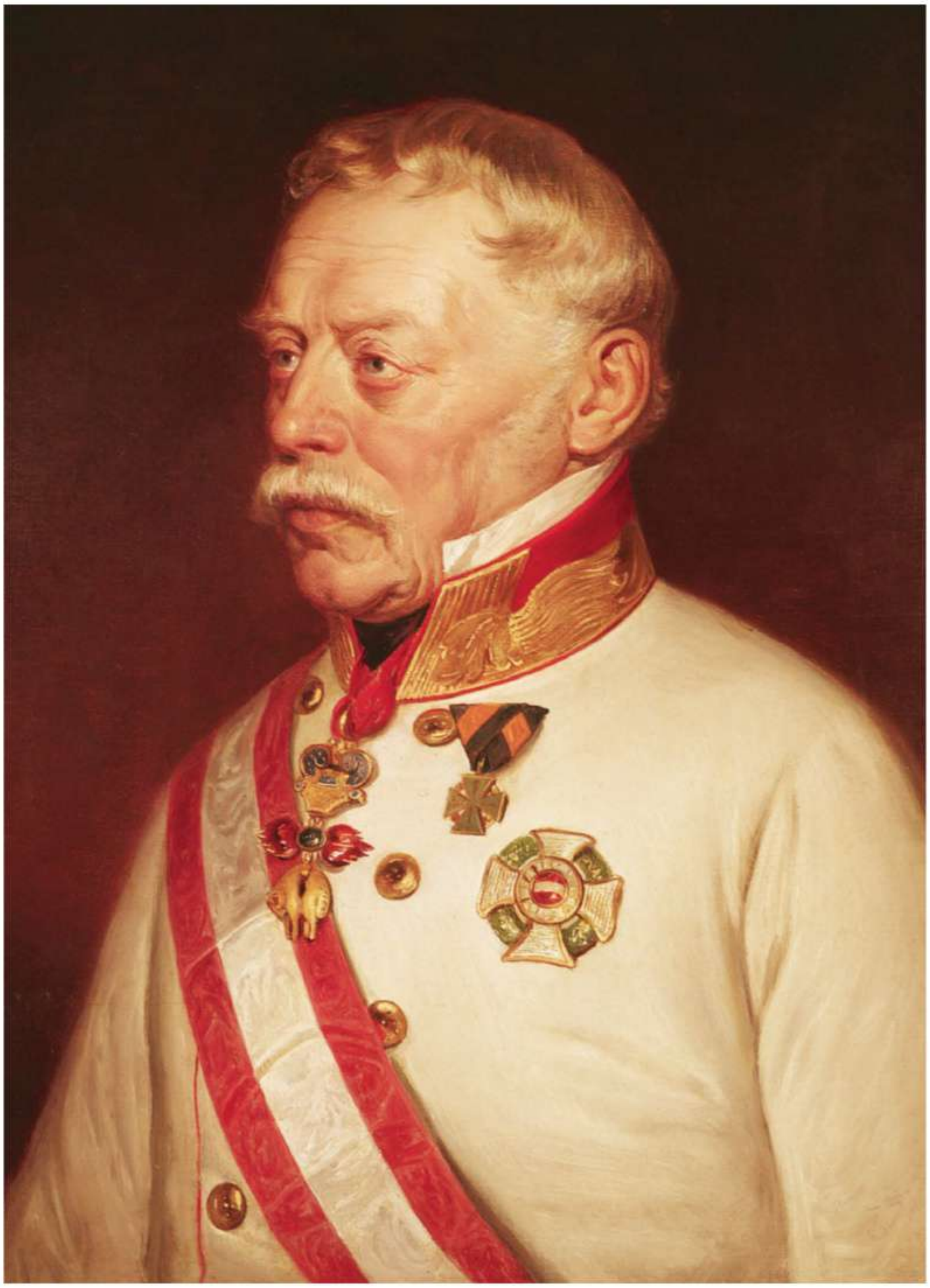
Radetzky marches on Italian rebels

An Austrian army commanded by Marshal Josef Radetzky defeated the Piedmontese Army at Custozza, a town near Lake Garda in the north of Italy, in a three-day battle that began on 24 July 1848. The battle represented a serious blow to Italian nationalists who had rebelled against their Austrian overlords in Milan and other cities in the north of the Italian peninsula.

The Piedmontese monarch, King Charles Albert, had mobilized his army after a rebellion in Milan chased out the Austrian garrison in March 1848. Piedmont was the only state in Italy ruled by an Italian secular authority, and as such became a natural focus for those Italians who wanted an Italian national government.

The Piedmontese captured the city of Peschiera before blockading another Austrian fortress-city, Mantua. Radetzky led his forces against the centre of the Piedmontese positions, and pushed them off a range of hills that commanded the general area on the 23rd. Over the following two days, the Piedmontese attempted to recapture these hills but were driven off with heavy losses. They then retreated back to Piedmont, harassed by the Hapsburg cavalry the whole way. An armistice was agreed, with Radetzky willing to accept a return to the situation before the revolution in Milan.

> “THE BATTLE REPRESENTED A SERIOUS BLOW TO ITALIAN NATIONALISTS WHO HAD REBELLED AGAINST THEIR AUSTRIAN OVERLORDS”



Austrian Marshal Josef Radetzky von Radetz crushed the hopes of Italian nationalists to liberate Lombardy and Venezia from Austrian control in the summer of 1848.

IN BRIEF

In Spain, a rebellion by supporters of the Carlist succession to the Spanish throne led to the inconclusive Battle of Pasteral in Catalonia in early 1849. The rebels found little support for their cause outside Catalonia and Aragon. The Carlists were a conservative group largely opposed to the liberal-minded regime established under the main line of the Borbón monarchs of Spain.

Chilean government wins at Loncomilla

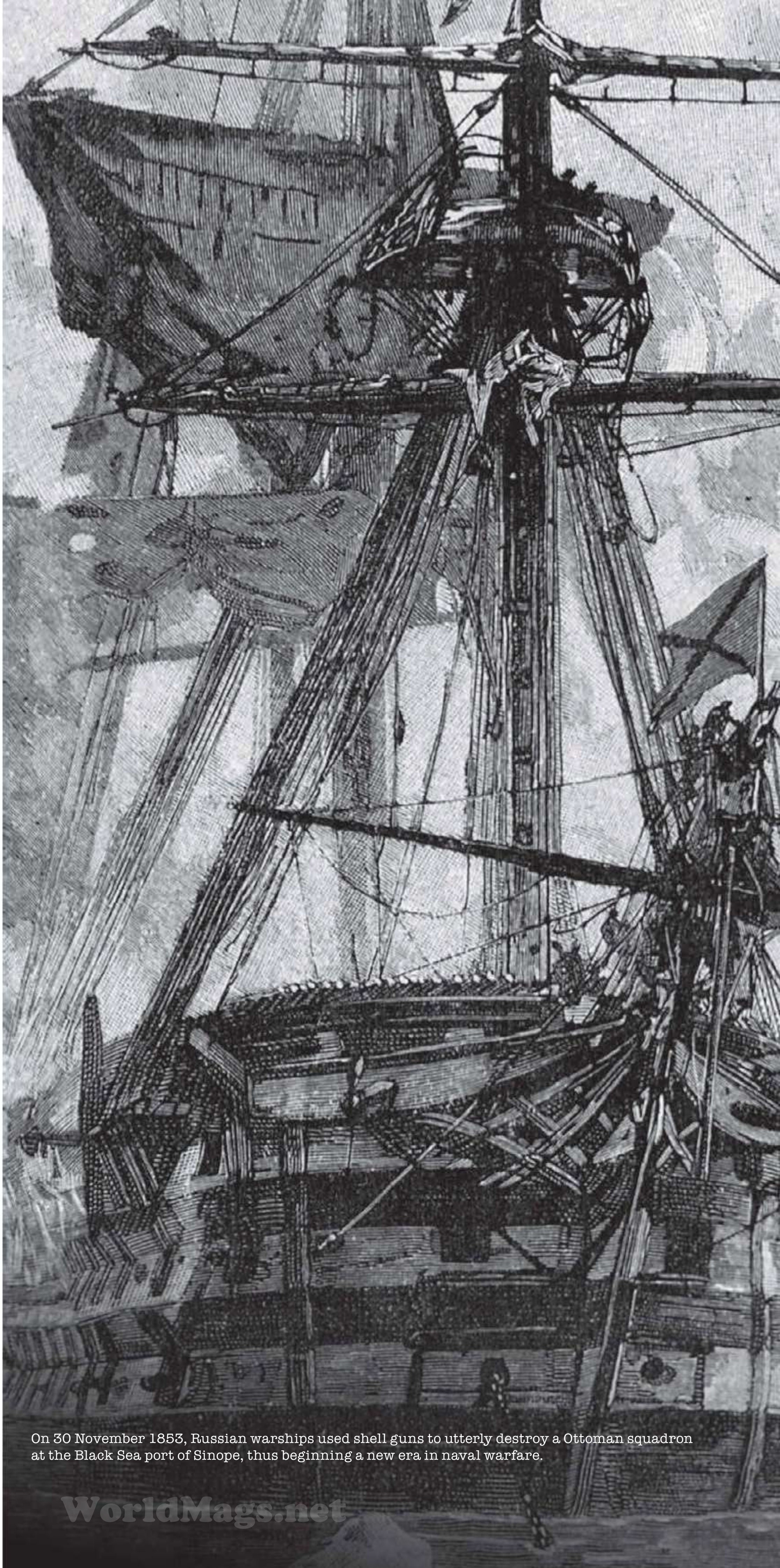
A civil war in Chile, launched by the losers in a recent presidential election, ended in victory for the government forces.

The struggle was caused by political tension between the ruling authoritarian conservatives, and an emerging young liberal and wealthy bourgeoisie. For ten years, Chile had been run by a conservative former general, Manuel Bulnes Prieto. In 1851, a new election for president was held, and Bulnes' hand-picked successor, Manuel Montt Torres, emerged victorious. Five days before the inauguration of Montt in September 1851, some liberals, in the provinces of Biobío, in the central south, and Coquimbo, north of the capital Santiago, rebelled.

The defeated liberal candidate, José Maria de la Cruz Prieto, assembled an army made up of veterans of frontier campaigns against the Indians, militia troops from Biobío and Araucanian Indians. He fought against the regular Chilean army at Loncomilla on 8 December 1851 and suffered a crushing defeat in one of the bloodiest battles of Chilean history, with over 3,500 casualties.

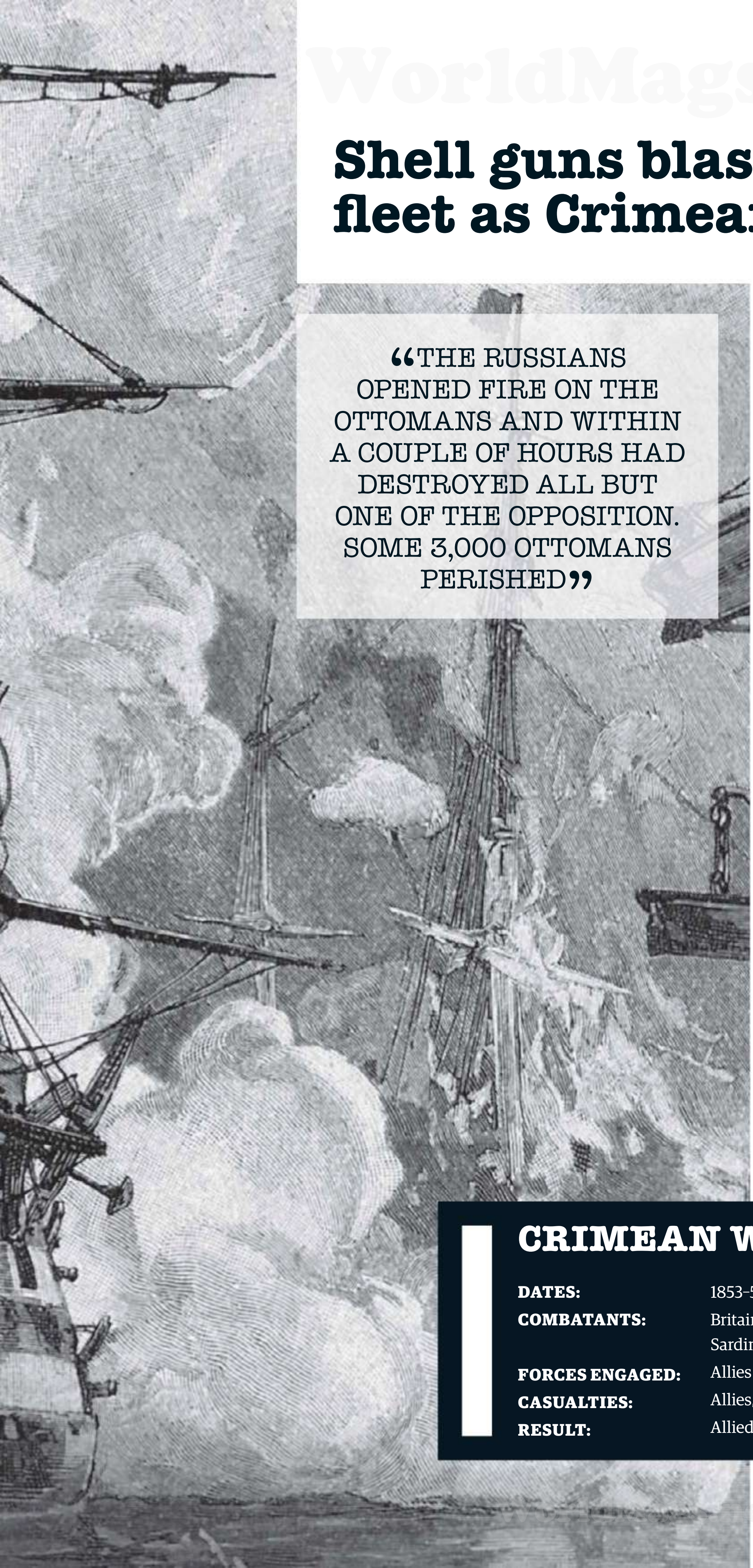
IN BRIEF

The duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, between Denmark and the German states, launched a rebellion against their Danish overlords in early 1848. The Prussian government supported the rebels, but the Danes received support from Sweden and Russia. Fighting in the conflict was largely restricted to the duchies themselves. In 1850, a settlement was achieved under which the two duchies remained part of Denmark, although with increased powers to their parliaments.



On 30 November 1853, Russian warships used shell guns to utterly destroy a Ottoman squadron at the Black Sea port of Sinope, thus beginning a new era in naval warfare.

Shell guns blast Ottoman fleet as Crimean War begins



> “THE RUSSIANS OPENED FIRE ON THE OTTOMANS AND WITHIN A COUPLE OF HOURS HAD DESTROYED ALL BUT ONE OF THE OPPOSITION. SOME 3,000 OTTOMANS PERISHED”

An Ottoman fleet was destroyed at Sinope, on the Black Sea coast of Turkey, by a Russian squadron, on 30 November 1853. This action is notable for being the first use of shell guns in naval warfare.

A dispute over the role of Russia's Tsar in protecting Christians in the Ottoman Empire resulted in a war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire that broke out in July 1853 when a Russian army crossed the Danube border and occupied the largely Christian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. The move provoked a general European crisis, as the French, under Napoleon III, had been agitating to replace the Russian Tsar as protector of Christians in the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman army checked the Russian advance, although no major battles were fought. The most influential event occurred in the war at sea.

A Russian squadron cruising off the Turkish coast discovered that their Ottoman counterparts had anchored in the port of Sinope in order to shelter from bad weather. The Russian commander, Vice Admiral Pavel Nakhimov, took the decision to attack. The Ottomans – 12 ships in total – were deployed in the typical crescent formation they adopted in port. Nakhimov ordered his ships – eight vessels, six of them larger than any of the Ottoman vessels – to sail into the harbour in a two-line formation. The Russians opened fire on the Ottomans and within a couple of hours had destroyed all but one of the opposition. Some 3,000 Ottomans perished, and Admiral Osman Pasha was taken prisoner. Russian losses were limited to about 300.

The Russian achievement shocked both France and Britain, to whom the Ottoman Empire turned for support. On 28 March 1854, Britain and France declared war on Russia, thus beginning the Crimean War.

CRIMEAN WAR

DATES:	1853–56
COMBATANTS:	Britain, France, Ottoman Empire, Sardinia-Piedmont vs Russia
FORCES ENGAGED:	Allies (estimate), 370,000; Russians (estimate), 400,000
CASUALTIES:	Allies, 145,000; Russia, 250,000
RESULT:	Allied victory

Britain and France have the upper hand in war with Russia

After nine months of conflict, Britain and France have the strategic advantage in a war with Russia, the allies' strategy having been advanced on two fronts, in the Baltic and in the Black Sea.

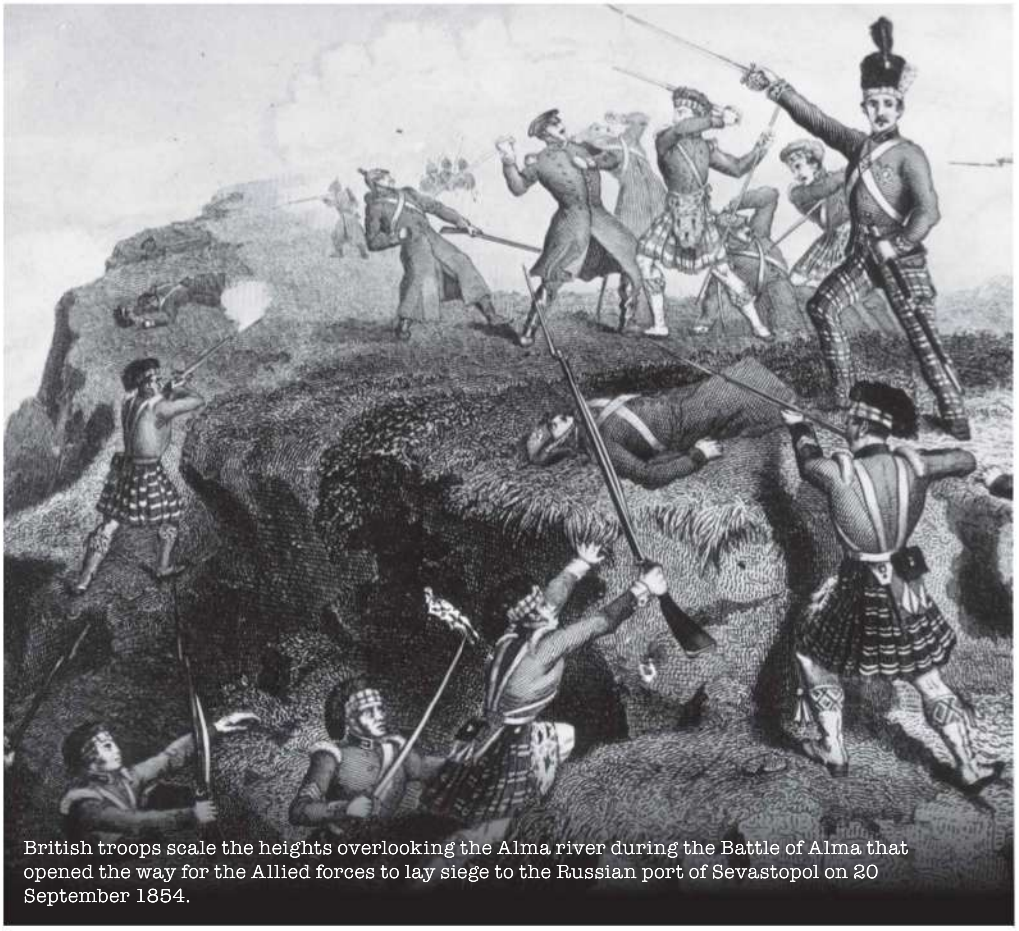
The war began as a military expedition to drive the Russians out of Moldavia and Wallachia, but the Russian Tsar withdrew his troops even before the arrival of British and French forces.

The allied army, numbering about 60,000, then landed at Kalamata Bay, in the Crimea, in September 1854. The objective was to capture the main Russian naval port in the Black Sea, at Sevastopol, but Russian defenders blocked their route at the Alma river. The allies attacked, but did not co-ordinate their moves properly. As a result, the British suffered needlessly heavy casualties in driving the Russians out of their position.

Although Sevastopol was placed under siege in October, the Russian commander at the Alma, Prince Menshikov, kept part of his army in the field. On 25 October, he led a raid against the British base of Balaclava, on the right of the allied siege lines. The Russians succeeded in capturing allied positions on the Causeway Heights overlooking Balaclava and their cavalry advanced against the port, but they were defeated by the "Thin Red Line" of the 93rd Highlanders. Meanwhile, another cavalry force directed at the rear of the British siege lines was engaged by the British Heavy Brigade and driven off.

The Battle of Balaclava is best remembered, though, for a British military disaster. The Russians were removing the guns from the redoubts the Ottomans had defended along the Causeway Heights. The British commander, Lord Raglan, sent an order to the Light Brigade to stop the Russians doing so. Its commander, Lord Cardigan, did not have the same view of the battlefield, and the only guns he could see were those positioned by the Russians in the valley between the Causeway Heights and the Sapoune Heights. Disastrously, he charged these, and lost half his command in a needless effort.

Eleven days later, on 5 November, Menshikov attacked the British again, at Inkerman. The Russians suffered extremely heavily in this battle and it marked the end of Menshikov's career. As winter settled in, both sides turned their attention to the siege.


British troops scale the heights overlooking the Alma river during the Battle of Alma that opened the way for the Allied forces to lay siege to the Russian port of Sevastopol on 20 September 1854.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AND MARY SEACOLE

News of the horrific conditions experienced by wounded British soldiers in the Crimea during the autumn of 1854 led to two enterprising women arriving to offer help. Florence Nightingale was the daughter of a wealthy family who rebuffed their concerns about her social status to embark on a career as a nurse. She arrived in Scutari, the site of the main British hospital in Turkey, and established a much more hygienic environment for the wounded cared for there. However, overcrowding and the proximity of sewers condemned her efforts to a degree of futility, as the death rate was unaffected by her efforts. A sanitary commission sent out in 1855 reduced the death rate more effectively.

Mary Seacole was a woman of Scots-Jamaican descent, who had run "hospitals" that were known as "hotels" for cholera victims located in Panama. In January 1855, Seacole set up a similar establishment for officers in the Crimea, as well as tending to the wounded on the battlefields of the war. Unlike Florence Nightingale's hospital, Mary Seacole's "hotel" was a private initiative that charged for its services.

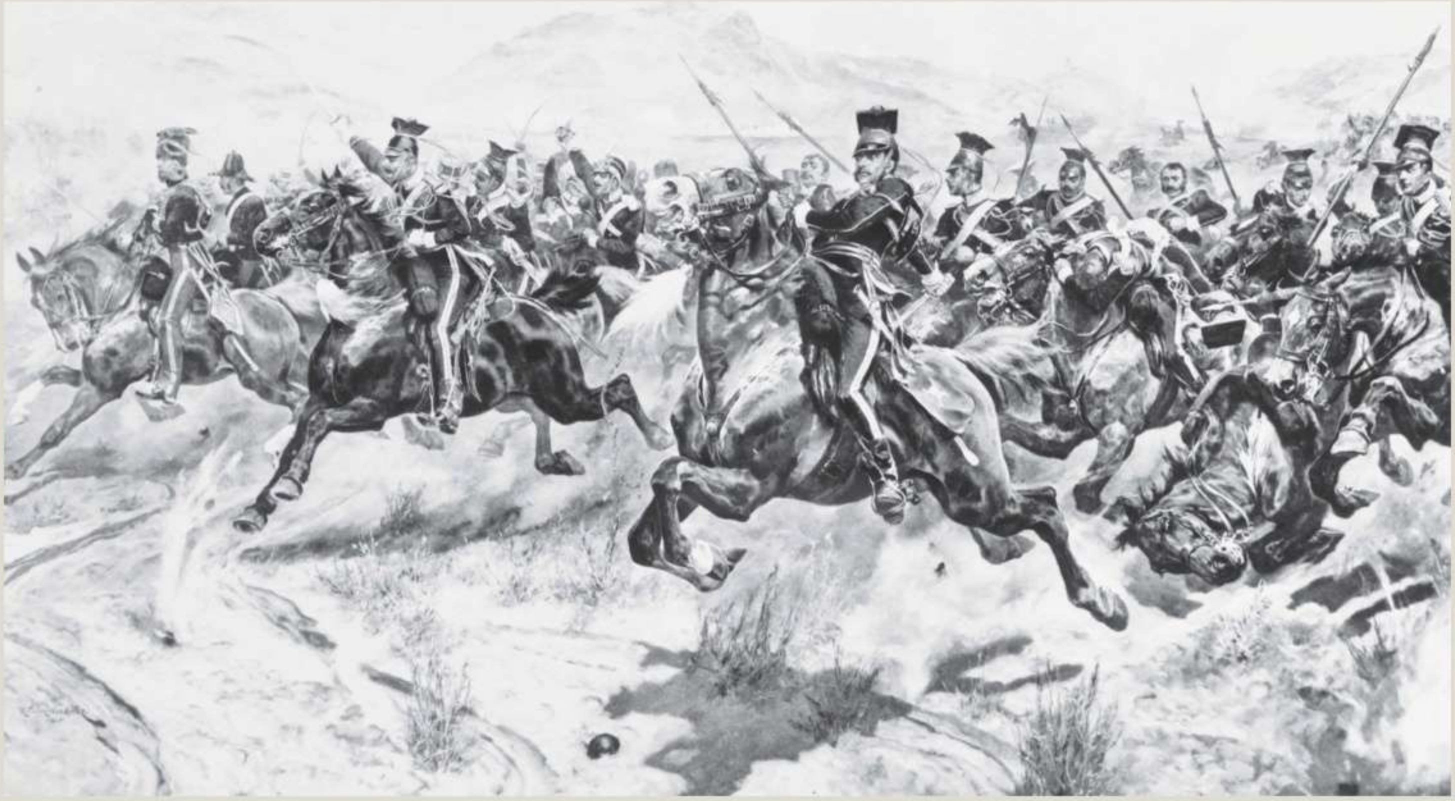
THE LIGHT BRIGADE: WHO BLUNDERED?

The Charge of the Light Brigade has achieved mythical status as a military blunder. Ever since the day it happened, there has been heated debate as to who was responsible.

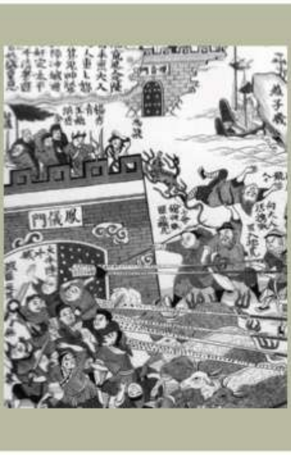
Lord Raglan, the British commander-in-chief, created confusion by sending two separate orders without specifying the same details in the second order as he had done in the first.

Lord Lucan, the commander of the British cavalry, did not interpret the order correctly, nor did he question the interpretation put on it by the aide who brought it to him. However, he did not have the same view of the battlefield as Lord Raglan. Lord Cardigan, the commander of the Light Brigade, did not discuss the order with Lucan, but did point out that he would be leading his men into a distinctly disadvantageous situation. Furthermore, he failed to keep in contact with the Heavy Brigade, advancing on his right.

Captain Louis Nolan, the aide who brought the order, gave an over-emotional display in explaining Lord Raglan's intent to Lord Lucan, possibly directing Lucan's gaze in the wrong direction.



Richard Caton Woodville's painting shows British cavalrymen of the 17th Lancers, one of five regiments in the Light Brigade, charge the Russian guns at Balaclava on 25 October 1854.



IN BRIEF

In China, a major rebellion broke out when a Christian-inspired sect, opposed to idolatry, formed a military organization that defeated an attempt by the imperial authorities to destroy them in December 1850. In the following year, Hung Hsiu-ch'üan, the sect's leader, who believed himself to be the Younger Brother of Jesus Christ, proclaimed himself the Heavenly King and established the Kingdom of Heavenly Peace. (Heavenly Peace is the English translation of T'ai-ping, which gave the rebels their name.) In March 1853, the Taipings took over Nanking, which they made their capital. A subsequent attempt to capture Peking failed, marking the high-water mark of the rebellion.

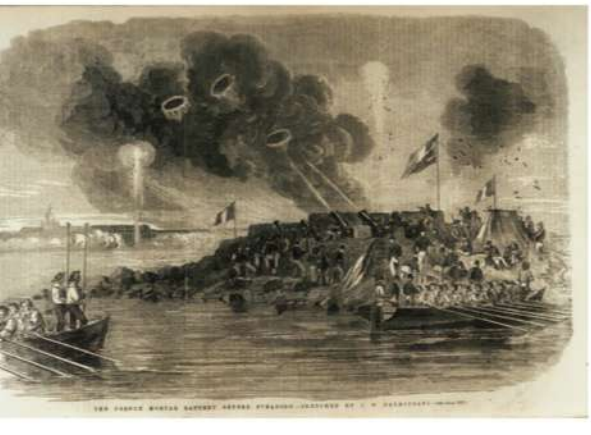
The Taiping Rebels fought ferociously against Imperial troops.

The decisive naval war in the Baltic

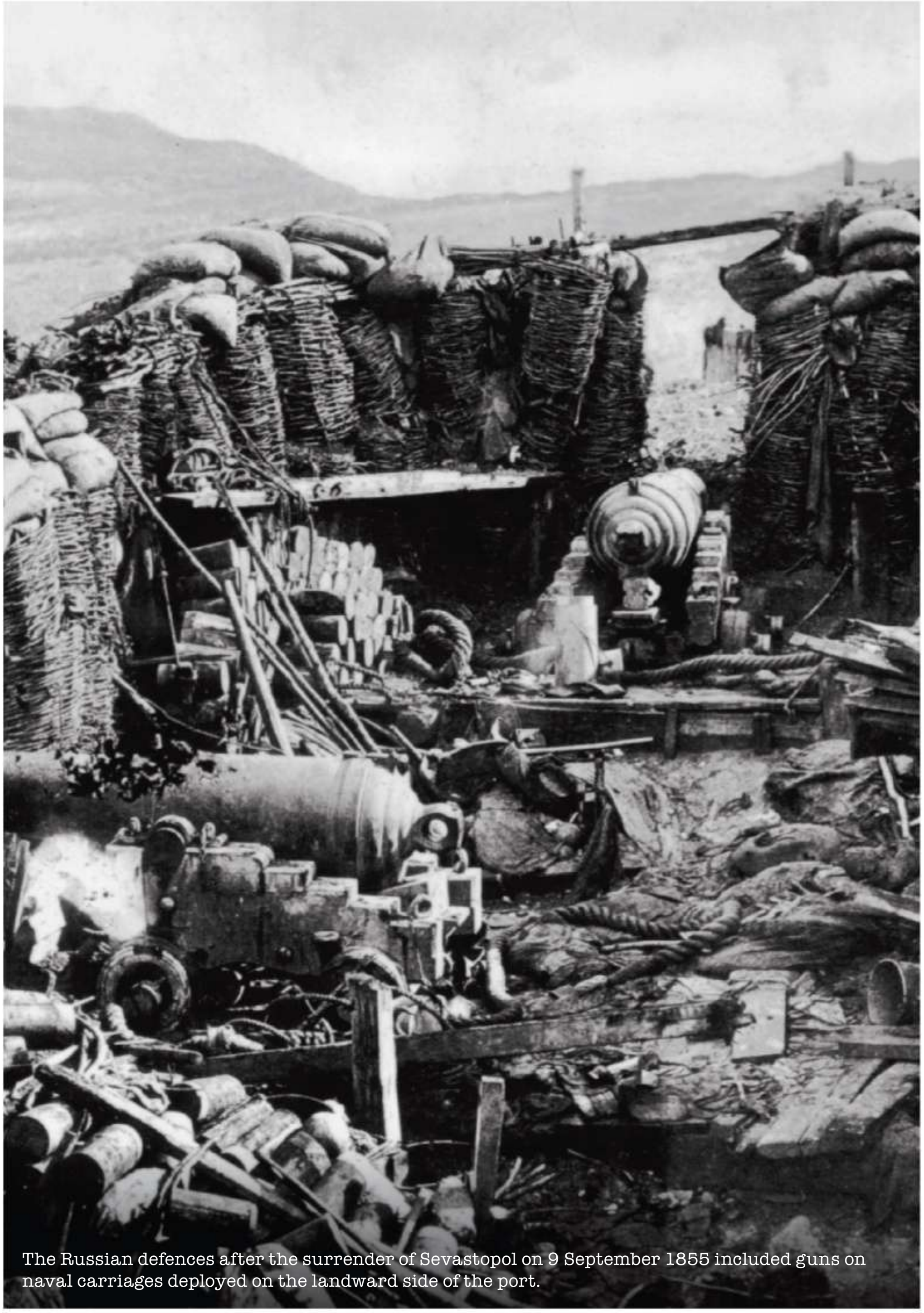
Allied plans to launch a naval attack on the Russian capital, St Petersburg, together with the threat of Austria joining the war on the allied side, convinced Tsar Alexander II that continuing the war into 1856 would lead to total Russian defeat. At a meeting of his council of advisers on 29 January 1856, he ordered his ministers to negotiate for peace.

The French and British had sent a large fleet to the Baltic in 1854, which compelled the Russians to withdraw their own vessels into the fortified ports of Sveaborg and Kronstadt. With the coming of winter, when the sea would freeze over, the allied squadron withdrew. In 1855, however, it returned and this time used floating batteries and mortar-equipped gunboats to destroy the Russian dockyard facilities at Sveaborg.

The success of the Sveaborg operation inspired the Great Armament – a collection of newly built batteries and gunboats specifically designed to bombard a fortified naval dockyard into submission – which targeted both the main Baltic naval base at Kronstadt and the nearby capital St Petersburg. Faced with the threat of this, the Russian government concluded it had no choice but to seek an end to the war.



The capture of the fort at Kinburn on 17 October 1855 was the last major operation in the Baltic Sea, and it involved the use of armoured floating batteries.



The Russian defences after the surrender of Sevastopol on 9 September 1855 included guns on naval carriages deployed on the landward side of the port.

Sevastopol falls after lengthy siege

After a siege lasting nearly a year, the garrison of the Russian naval base of Sevastopol abandoned it to the allied armies on 11 September 1855. The evacuation was caused by the capture of the Kornilov Redoubt, a key position on the Malakoff Hill overlooking the city, during an allied assault.

The French had pushed forward their trenches to within 84 feet (26 m) of the Russian defences, and synchronized their assault using watches. Although the fighting was hard, by throwing a whole corps into the assault – some 10,000 men – the French simply overwhelmed the defenders.

The allied success has come after months of frustration. Following a failed assault on Sevastopol in October 1854 and the Russian assault on the allied siege lines in November of the same year, both sides devoted more of their effort to coping with the harsh weather than to pursuing the siege aggressively. Disease and bad weather had badly affected the allies. The ordinary British soldier suffered terribly, especially compared to his French counterpart, who had at least been provided with timber huts. One British regiment, the 28th Foot, 783 strong when it embarked for the Crimea, lost 265 men dead to disease, malnutrition and exposure alone, before any losses to enemy action.

When the late Russian Tsar, Nicholas, learned of the difficulties the weather was causing the allied troops his confidence had risen. He believed that "Generals January and February" would transform the Russian chances of victory dramatically. However, his generals in the field were less enthusiastic about their chances and, after the failure of a probe at Eupatoria on 17 February, a new commander, Prince Dmitri Gorchakov, was appointed.

The siege was an impressive engineering effort on both sides. There had been a number of major assaults on the Russian defences prior to the final one, and the one of 18 June 1855 in particular was intended to capture the city for the allies. Some 10,000 men from both sides were killed or wounded in this attack.

A Russian attack on the French in August, at the Tchernaya river, was intended as a last attempt to break the siege. If it failed, Gorchakov believed nothing could save Sevastopol. Reinforcements from the rest of Russia arrived in the Crimea after long marches across the Ukraine and were barely fit for service; the same problems of deaths through disease and lack of supplies affected the Russians as the allies.

As it was, the attack failed miserably, in part because Gorchakov did not expect it to succeed. It was a gesture, not a serious attempt and was followed by a 20-day allied bombardment that ended with the assault and capture of the Kornilov Redoubt.

“THERE HAD BEEN A NUMBER OF MAJOR ASSAULTS ON THE RUSSIAN DEFENCES PRIOR TO THE FINAL ONE”

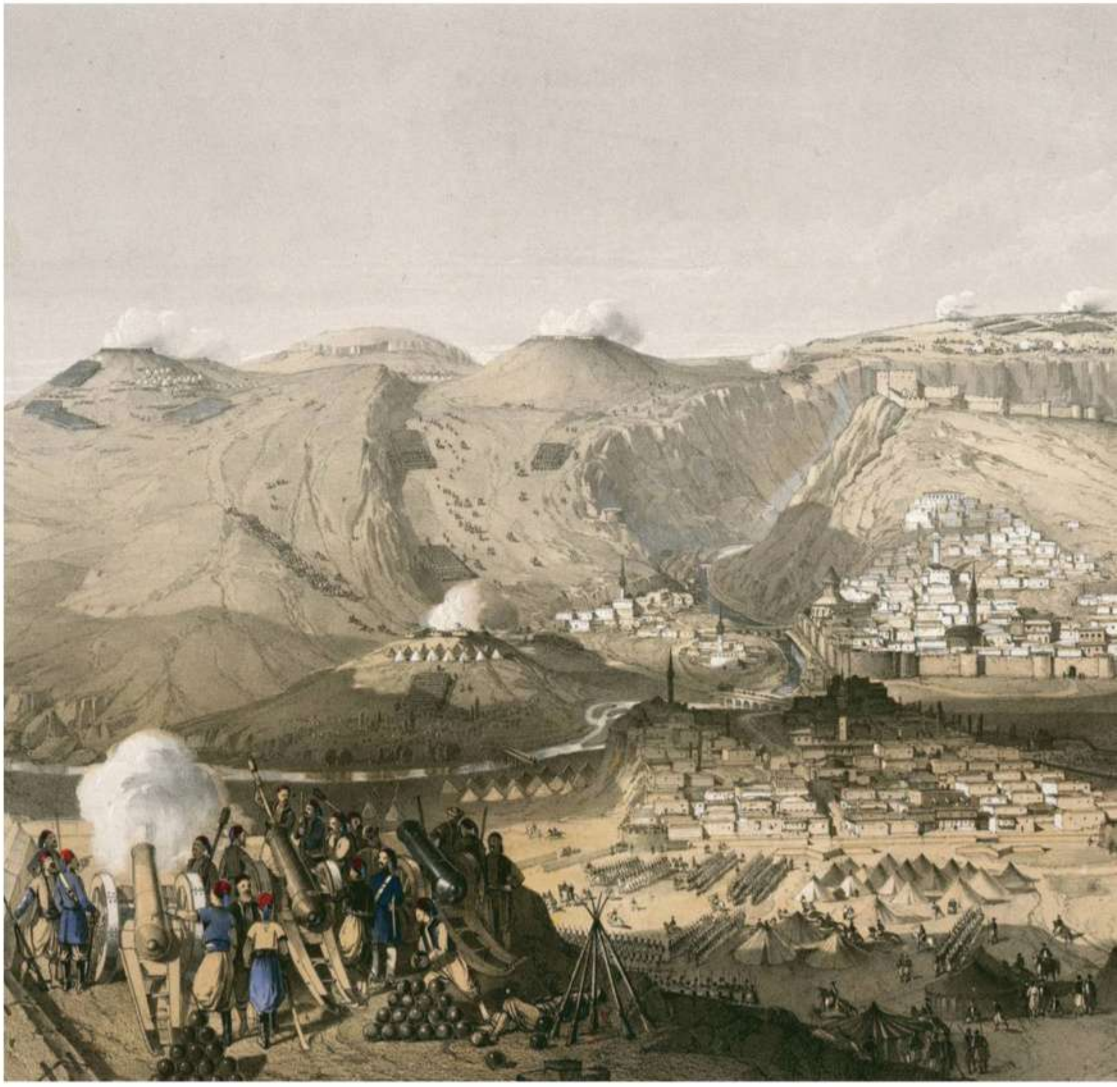
Stubborn Ottomans aid allied victory in Crimean War

The Ottoman armed forces, having begun their war with Russia badly, eventually played an important role in the allied victory.

The Ottomans fought on three fronts in the war. Their first campaigns were against the Russians in the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. Here, they managed to halt the Russian advance, although they could not on their own reverse the Russian occupation of these vassal states of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottomans were also involved in an offensive into the areas of Georgia and Armenia controlled by Russia. Here the Ottomans experienced less success than they did in the Balkans. In 1854, three battles resulted in the Ottomans being forced back into the city of Kars. However, this strongpoint would defy the Russians until after Sevastopol had fallen, in part owing to the efforts of a British officer seconded to the Ottomans, Nova Scotian-born William Fenwick Williams.

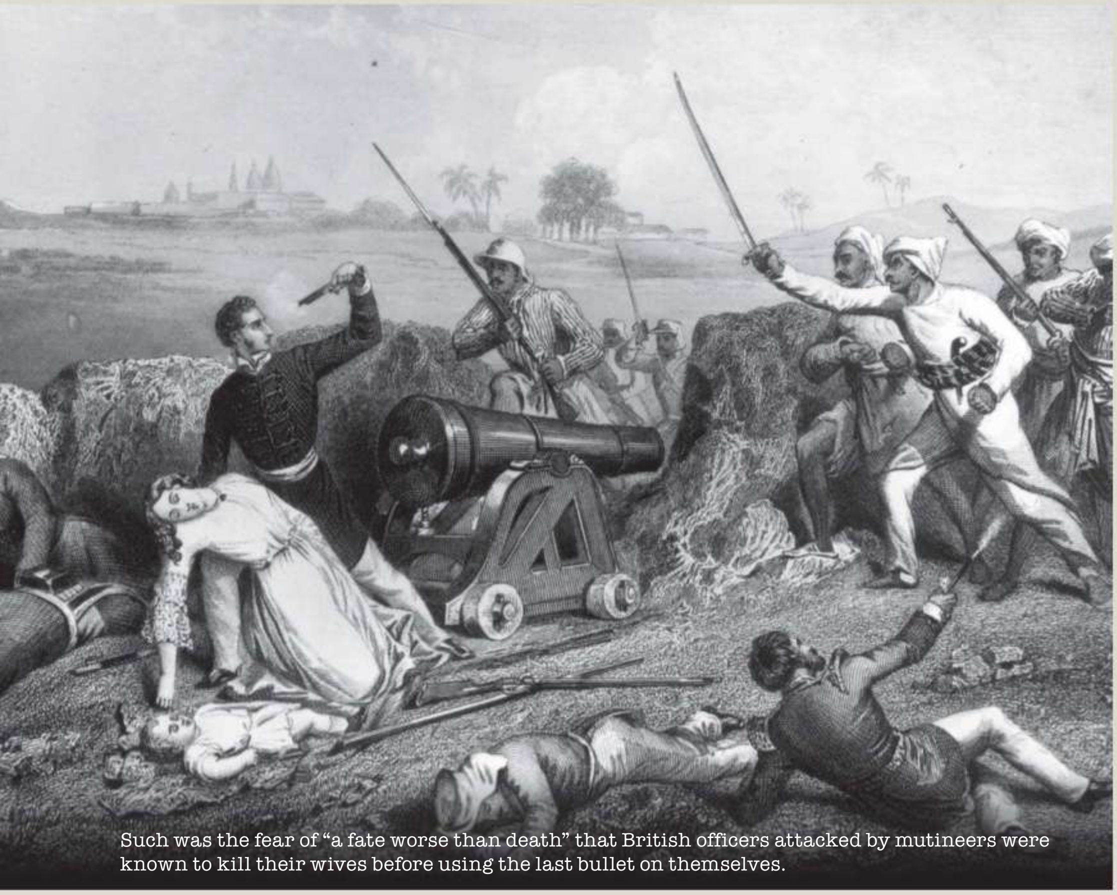
The garrison managed to keep the Russians out of Kars from the beginning of the siege in June 1855 until the end of it in November the same year.



Ottoman artillery pounds Russian positions around the town of Kars in the Caucasus Mountains. The Russian siege of the Ottoman-defended town lasted a total of five months.

Rebellion in India challenges British rule

A major uprising in the subcontinent of India attempted to bring an end to British rule in India, using the Mogul emperor as their figurehead. The backbone of the uprising was provided by the native troops employed by the British East India Company, who mutinied against their officers and took up arms against the British. The mutiny was largely restricted to the Ganges valley between Delhi and Bengal.



Such was the fear of "a fate worse than death" that British officers attacked by mutineers were known to kill their wives before using the last bullet on themselves.

On 10 May 1857, two regiments of native troops, part of the British East India Company's army in India, rebelled against their officers and launched the biggest challenge to British rule in India since the victory at Plassey had established British control of the subcontinent in 1757. There was a rumour among the troops that rifles issued to them used cartridges greased with the fat of cows and pigs, animals whose consumption was forbidden to the Hindu and Moslem soldiers in the ranks. Regardless of whether this was true, the rumour united traditional rivals in hostility toward their officers. The initial uprising occurred at Meerut, 40 miles (64 km) from Delhi, where a garrison of about 4,000 troops was equally divided between Indian and British forces.

The rebels marched on Delhi, where the last Mogul emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, lived. Bahadur had been told by the British authorities that he would be the last emperor and that after his death his sons would not be allowed to inherit his throne. Bahadur accepted this with good grace, but his sons were less enthusiastic. When the native troops, or sepoys, arrived in Delhi, Bahadur found himself pushed into the position of figurehead for the rebellion.

The rebels also got support from the heir to the other great pre-British Indian state, the Maratha Confederacy. The adopted son of the last head of state, Nana Sahib, lived near the garrison town of Cawnpore. When the native troops of that locality mutinied, he joined them, and may have been connected with the subsequent massacre there. Other rulers backing the uprising included the Rani of Jhansi and the Emir Haji Imdadullah.

The British forces in India first sought to topple Bahadur Shah Zafar with troops drawn from the garrisons at Meerut and Simla, who marched slowly from their bases towards the traditional northern Indian capital, Delhi. One reason for the slowness of their advance was the desire to 'punish' Indians by pillaging and murdering in all the towns and villages along the route. The rebels were defeated in the field on 8 June at Badli-ke-Serai, and the British reached Delhi on 1 July, where they began a partial blockade, the assault being delayed until the arrival of the siege train on 4 September. Further reinforcements had been on the march from other garrisons in India during the preceding two months, so that by 14 September, the day of the assault, an army of 15,000 had been built up. The imperial palace was occupied by troops loyal to the British on 21 September and Bahadur Shah Zafar was captured, as were his sons. The latter were shot in cold blood by a British officer, Major William Hodson, and their heads were presented by Hodson to Bahadur.

> “THE REBELS WERE DEFEATED IN THE FIELD ON 8 JUNE AT BADLI-KE-SERAI, AND THE BRITISH REACHED DELHI ON 1 JULY, WHERE THEY BEGAN A PARTIAL BLOCKADE”

Meanwhile, the European members of the garrison at Lucknow managed to hold out against the rebels. Shortly after news of the Meerut garrison's mutiny reached Lucknow on 14 May 1857, General Henry Lawrence, the commander there, fortified the Residency in order to make a stand until relief should come. He managed to disarm or chase out of the garrison compound all disloyal troops, but

The Secundra Bagh, Lucknow: still littered with skeletons months after the relief in November 1857.

the whole of the former kingdom of Oudh, of which Lucknow was the capital, was in revolt.

Lawrence had done his work badly, and the entire Residency was vulnerable to rebel musket and artillery fire. Casualties among the defenders were heavy, including Lawrence himself on 4 July 1857.

Control of Oudh was important to challenging British rule in India, with a major centre of rebellion next to the Great Trunk Road between Delhi and Calcutta, but the rebels here were unable to co-ordinate their activities with resistance elsewhere. A rebellion at Allahabad failed owing to the prompt arrival of British troops under General Henry Havelock, who recaptured Cawnpore on 17 July, pausing here before leaving to relieve Lucknow in mid September. But this force was not large enough to break out again and it took the arrival of a second column of reinforcements to enable the defenders of Lucknow to escape.

Relief of Lucknow

When British troops reached Lucknow on 18 November 1857, the garrison was able to evacuate the Residency it had defended for six months and rejoin the main British forces at Cawnpore, along the Great Trunk Road. British resistance kept the rebels from seizing control of this important road and separating the two main centres of British military strength in northern India.

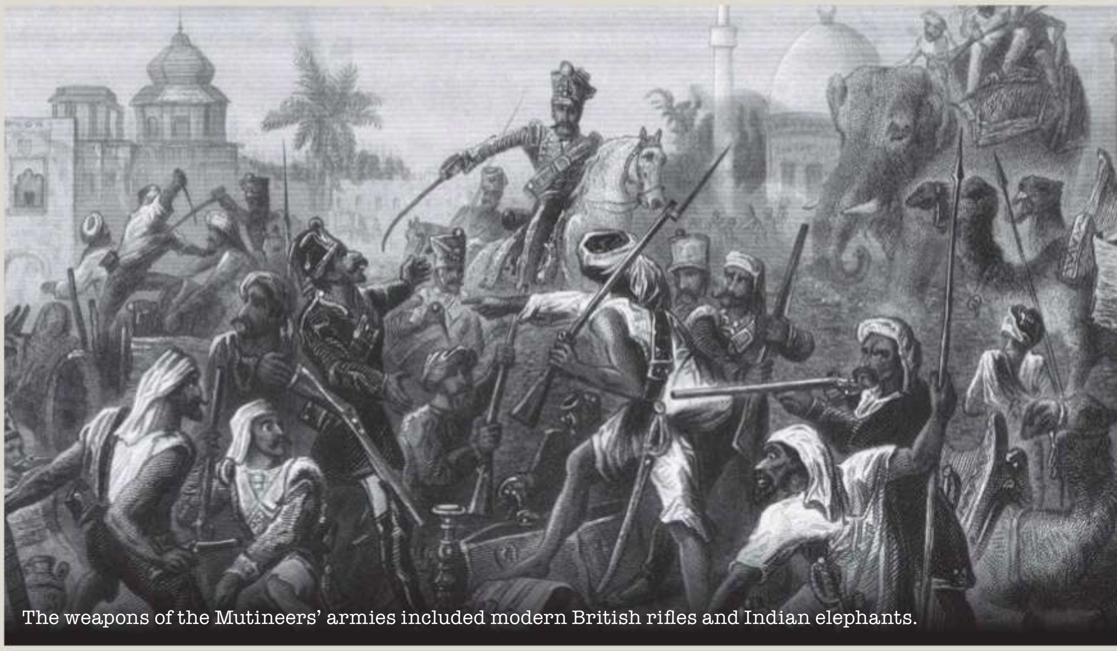
In December 1857, there remained three main concentrations of rebels: in Oudh, Lucknow was still in rebel hands; in Jhansi, the Rani there controlled an important force; and Cawnpore was threatened by a large, but untrained, army led by Tantia Tope.

Tantia Tope's was the first force dealt with. He attempted to recapture Cawnpore, but was defeated in battle on 6 December 1857, which was the last chance the rebels had of gaining control of part of the Great Trunk Road.

In February 1858, two British forces moved against Lucknow and Jhansi, both of which fell to the British: Lucknow in March and Jhansi in April. From Lucknow, the British concentrated on driving the remaining rebels north toward Nepal, but by then the Rani of Jhansi had joined with Tantia Tope to form the most powerful force remaining to the rebels.

The rebels tried to make a stand at Kunch on 6 May 1858, and at Kalpi on 22 May, but were beaten twice, retreating in the direction of Gwalior, a city controlled by a native prince loyal to the British. This the rebels occupied at the beginning of June and the victor of Kunch and Kalpi, General Sir Hugh Rose, advanced to recapture it. On three successive days of fighting, 17-19 June, Rose eliminated the last main field army of rebels. The Rani of Jhansi was killed but Tantia Tope escaped to wage a campaign of guerrilla warfare that lasted until he was captured in April 1859. His execution on 18 April 1859 can be taken as the last act of the Indian Mutiny. British rule was firmly re-established, but the former regime of the East India Company was replaced by one directly controlled by the government in London.

> “TANTIA TOPE'S WAS THE FIRST FORCE DEALT WITH. HE ATTEMPTED TO RECAPTURE CAWNPORE, BUT WAS DEFEATED IN BATTLE ON 6 DECEMBER 1857”



The weapons of the Mutineers' armies included modern British rifles and Indian elephants.

Bloody victory at Solferino creates Red Cross

The allied army of Piedmont and France achieved a major victory over their Austrian opponents at the Battle of Solferino on 24 June 1859. In subsequent treaty negotiations, the Austrian emperor ceded Lombardy to the king of Piedmont.

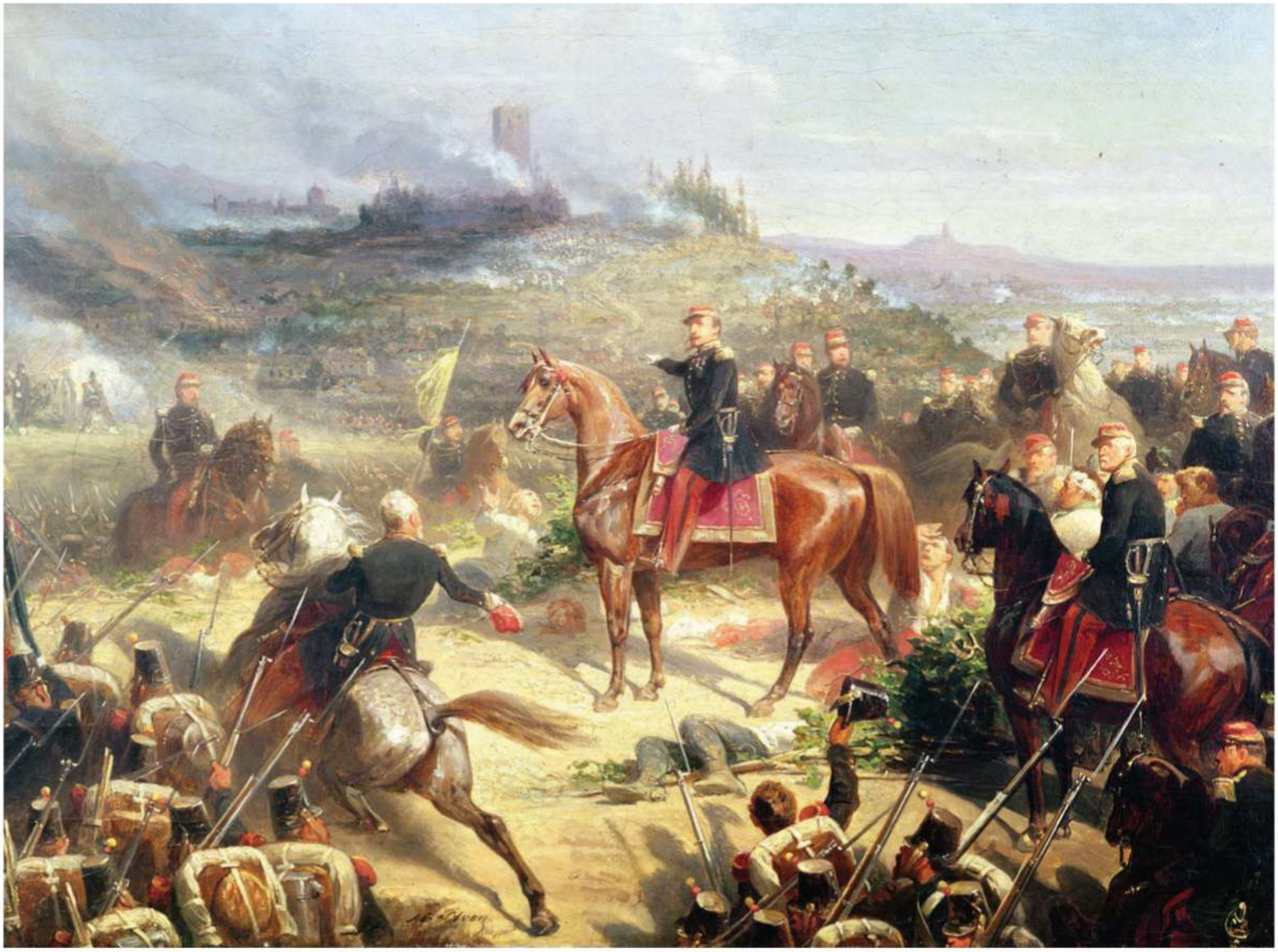
The battle was a bizarre mix of intention and blundering. Franz Josef II, the Austrian emperor, dismissed the defeated commander of the Battle of Magenta on 17 June and took titular command of his army in the field, whilst yielding actual authority to a council of generals. When the generals requested an offensive that the emperor was not happy about he conceded to their expert knowledge.

The advancing allies, expecting no opposition, were surprised to find the Austrians crossing the Mincio river on 22 June 1859. The Austrians were able to occupy all the dominating high ground around Solferino before the allies could organize their attacks.

The battle was effectively a savage melee across a front of about 5½ miles (9 km). A Swiss observer, Henri Dunant, remembered: "Austrians and allies trampled each other under foot, slaughtered each other on a carpet of bloody corpses, smashed each other with rifle butts, crushed each other's skulls, disembowelled each other with sabre and bayonet."

By nightfall, the Austrians were in a retreat that was only saved from being a rout by the actions of General Count Von Benedek, whose rearguard action delayed the allied pursuit.

Dunant's published memoir of the battle and its aftermath, including the makeshift hospitals that tried to save as many wounded as they could, led to a Geneva conference and the founding of the International Red Cross in 1863.



Emperor Napoleon III of France gives orders to one of his subordinates during the battle of Solferino, 24 June 1859. The Battle of Solferino, 24th June 1859 (oil on canvas), by Adolphe Yvon (1817–93).

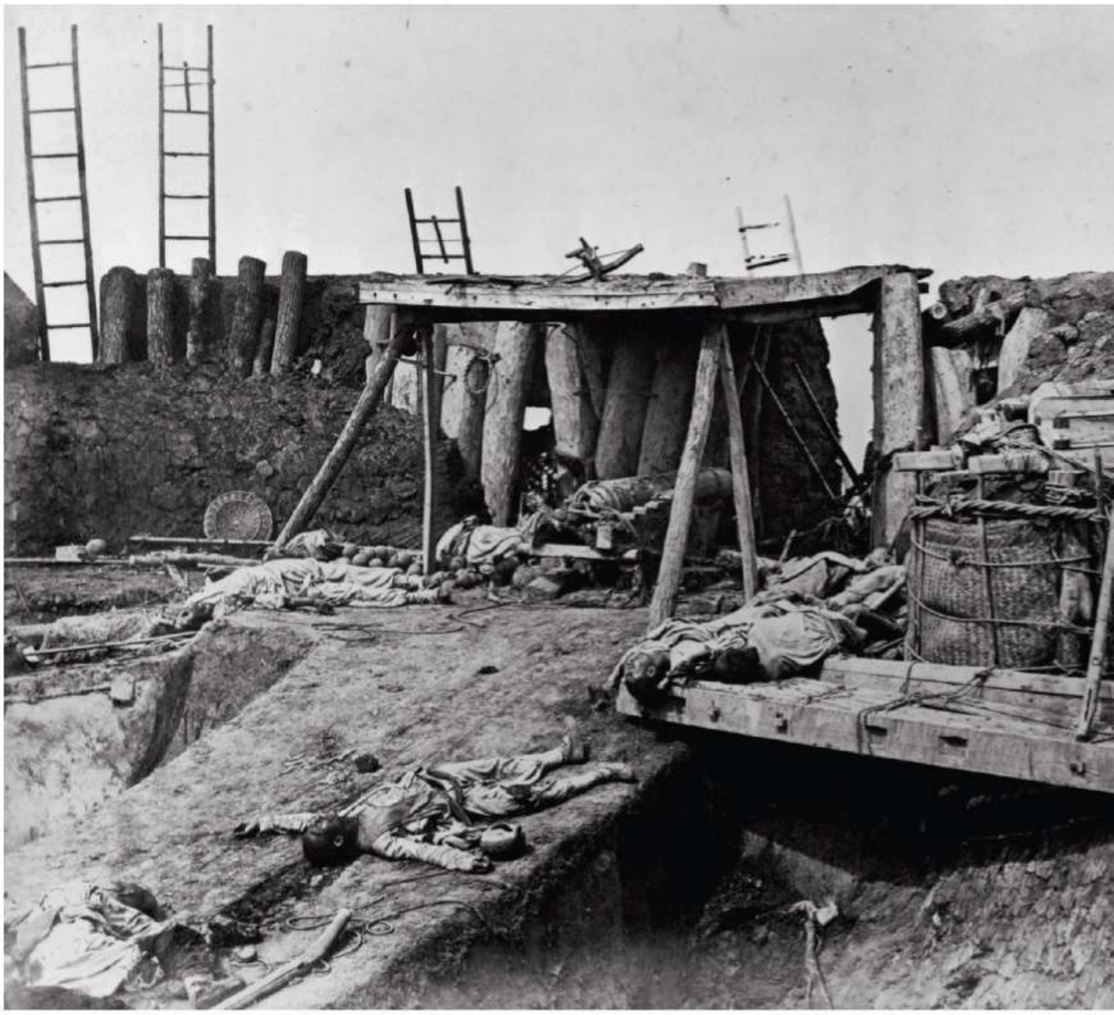
British, French storm China

On 18 October 1860 a British force set fire to the Old Summer Palace of China and burned it to the ground, bringing to an end a two-year conflict that had its origins in 1856.

In that year, Chinese officials seized a British-registered ship, the Arrow, which led to the bombardment of the Taku forts at Tientsin in 1858, and a treaty that improved the rights of Westerners to trade with China. However, Chinese unwillingness to complete all the formalities required by this treaty led to further armed action on the part of Britain and France against China. The Taku forts were again bombarded, and this time a significant military force was landed in August 1860. These troops carried out a successful assault on the Taku forts on 21 August before advancing on Peking, the Chinese imperial capital. This was reached on 26 September and the city surrendered on 6 October.

The victorious soldiers looted the Summer Palace of the emperor, and on 18 October, following the negotiation of a further treaty that ratified the unfinished formalities of the 1858 treaty, they were ordered to burn it.

> “A BRITISH FORCE SET FIRE TO THE OLD SUMMER PALACE OF CHINA AND BURNED IT TO THE GROUND”



Chinese soldiers lie dead around the defences of one of the Taku forts that guarded the port at Tientsin until their capture by French and British forces on 21 August 1860.

IN BRIEF

- A brief war between Spain and Morocco in 1859–60 broke out after the Moroccans raided the outskirts of Ceuta and Melilla, cities controlled by Spain. When the Spanish invaded in order to seize territory from Morocco they defeated the Moors at Castillejos on 1 January 1860, and subsequently laid siege to the city of Tétuan. A second battle on 23 March 1860 resulted in another Spanish victory, after which the Moors agreed to a peace treaty, granting Spain all its demands.

- A revolution in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, in southern Italy, in April 1860, led to the invasion of the kingdom by Italian nationalist Giuseppe Garibaldi and his thousand Redshirts. On 20 July, Garibaldi’s army defeated their Neapolitan enemies at the Battle of Milazzo, which ended resistance to him on the island of Sicily. His army then invaded the peninsular part of the kingdom on 19 August. The final victory was won at the Volturno on 2–3 October 1860. In late October, the kingdom of the Two Sicilies voted to join the House of Savoy’s Kingdom of Italy.

- In Colombia, an important battle occurred at Manizales on 28 August 1860. The fighting was part of an uprising against the central government started by secessionist leaders in the Valle de Cauca, west and south-west of Bogotá. After some initial success, the rebels were eventually defeated.

America begins Civil War

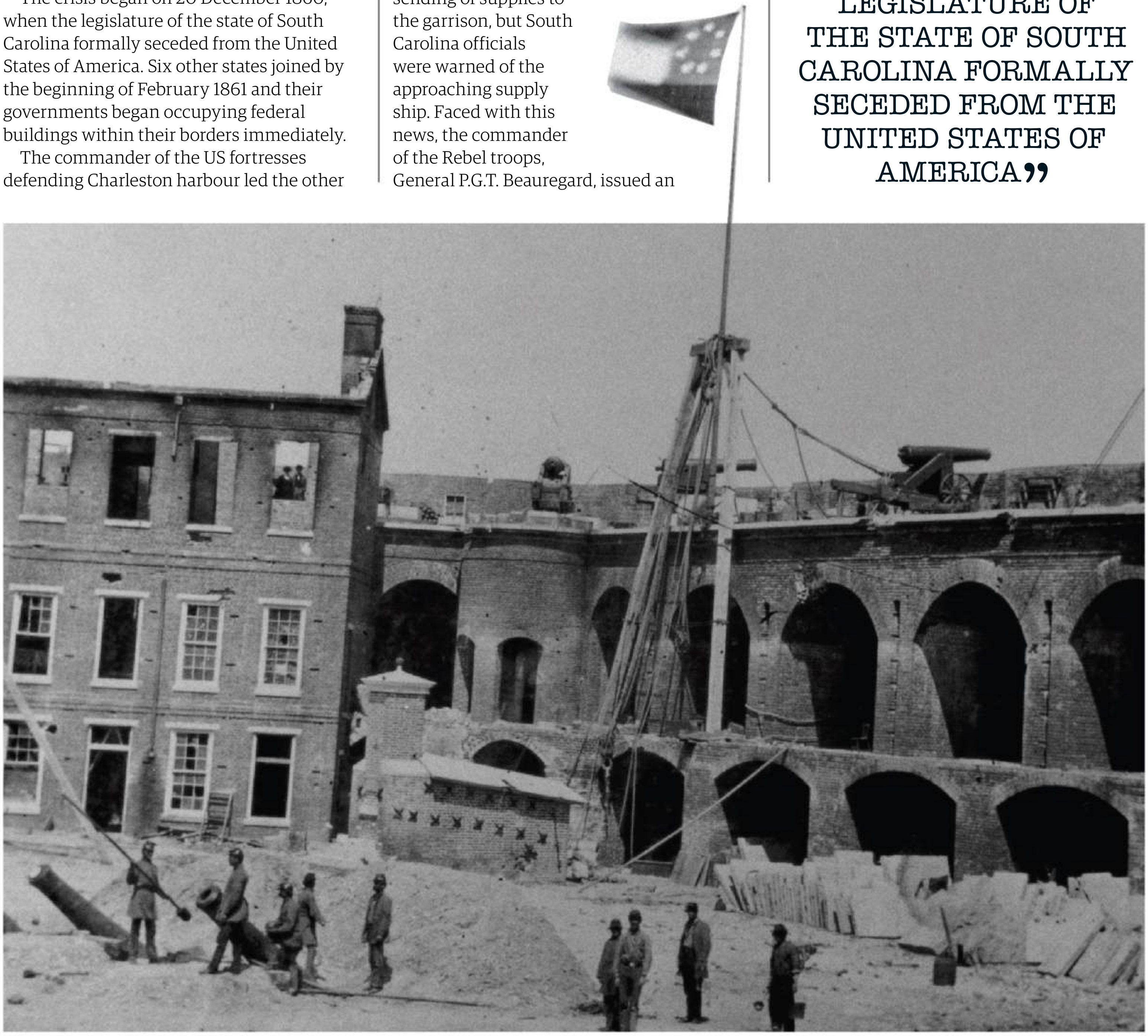
The festering crisis over control of Fort Sumter, in the middle of the harbour of Charleston, South Carolina, was resolved on 13 April 1861 after the fort surrendered following a 36-hour bombardment. The fort had been occupied by a garrison of US troops, while its attackers were members of the armies of rebellious American states that had formed the Confederate States of America.

The crisis began on 20 December 1860, when the legislature of the state of South Carolina formally seceded from the United States of America. Six other states joined by the beginning of February 1861 and their governments began occupying federal buildings within their borders immediately.

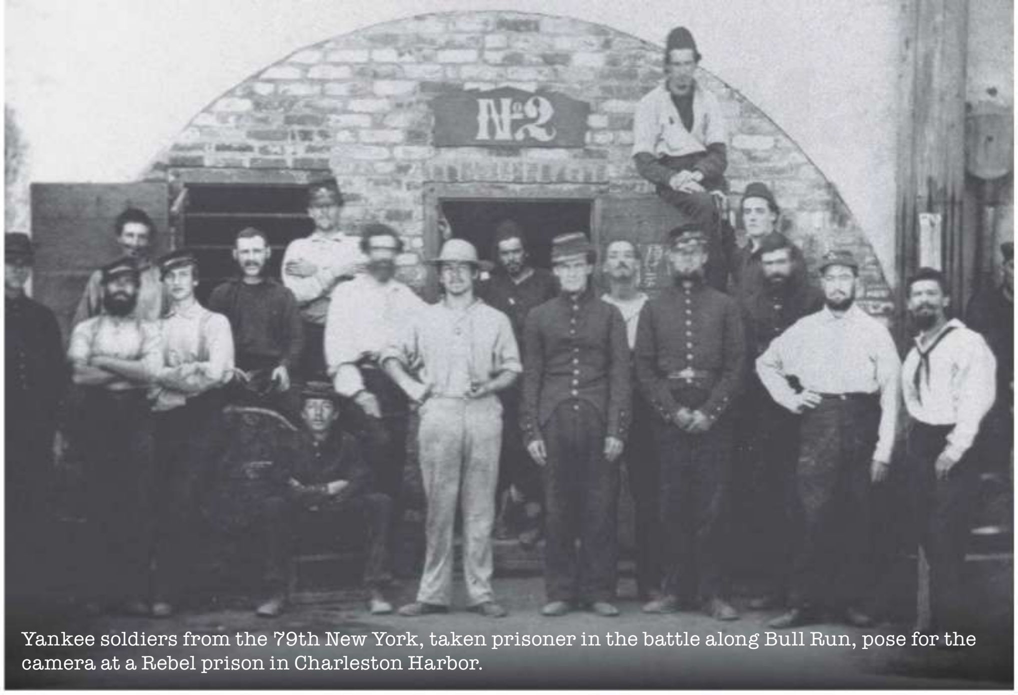
The commander of the US fortresses defending Charleston harbour led the other Federal garrisons to Fort Sumter on 27 December 1860, conceding the rest of the fortifications to South Carolina. The Rebel government, acting in support of South Carolina, assembled an army at Charleston and batteries trained their guns on Fort Sumter.

On 4 April 1861, the recently inaugurated president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, ordered the sending of supplies to the garrison, but South Carolina officials were warned of the approaching supply ship. Faced with this news, the commander of the Rebel troops, General P.G.T. Beauregard, issued an ultimatum to the defenders of Fort Sumter, requiring them to evacuate the fort. When they refused, the bombardment commenced at 4.30 a.m. on 12 April.

> “THE CRISIS BEGAN ON 21 DECEMBER 1860, WHEN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA FORMALLY SECEDED FROM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA”



The Confederate “Stars and Bars” flag flies over Fort Sumter, the fort in Charleston harbour that triggered the outbreak of a civil war.



Yankee soldiers from the 79th New York, taken prisoner in the battle along Bull Run, pose for the camera at a Rebel prison in Charleston Harbor.

Federal advance to Richmond beaten at Bull Run

The army of the Rebel government of the Confederate States of America won a significant victory over the forces of the United States at the Battle of Bull Run on 21 July 1861. The Federal forces had advanced from Washington DC against the main Rebel army in Virginia, which was protecting the Confederacy's new capital at Richmond, as it was generally believed on the Federal side if Richmond was taken, the Confederacy would collapse.

The Rebel forces arrayed themselves along Bull Run, a stream that ran between the towns of Centreville and Manassas. General Irvin McDowell, the Federal commander, did not realize, as he advanced, that the main Rebel force, the Army of the Potomac, commanded by General P.G.T. Beauregard, had been reinforced. The Confederate Army of the Shenandoah had evaded the Federal army confronting it. Each side numbered around 30,000 on the day of battle.

Both sides had intended to attack, using an identical plan. Their left wings would make a feint attack, while their right wings would try to outflank the enemy. By virtue of moving first, McDowell took the initiative. Beauregard attempted to get his army going forward, but the commander of the Army of the Shenandoah, General Joseph E. Johnston, realized that the Federal forces had taken the initiative, and the Rebel plan was abandoned.

Fierce fighting occurred on Henry House Hill, just west of Bull Run. The Rebel commanders rushed reinforcements there and a confused action was terminated when Rebel troops dressed in blue – the most common colour of uniform at this time among Federal troops – were mistaken for Federal troops and captured a key Federal artillery position. The Federal forces eventually began a rout that only finished once they had got past Centreville.

The Federal casualties amounted to around 3,000 men; the Rebels lost just under 2,000.

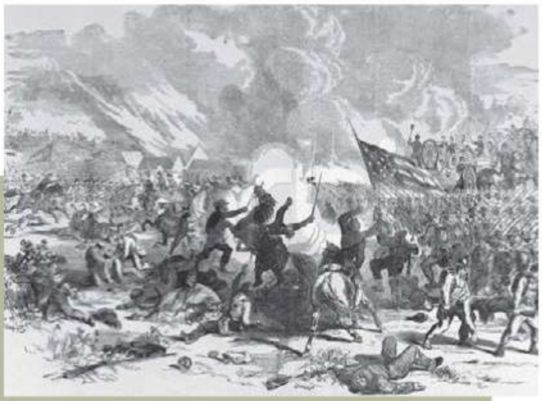
Wilson's Creek battle restores Rebel hopes

Rebel sympathizers in the divided border state of Missouri received a fillip on 10 August 1861, when Rebel forces defeated a smaller, but better-equipped, Federal army at the Battle of Wilson's Creek. The Federal commander, fiery General Nathaniel Lyon, whose efforts during previous months had secured St Louis and eastern Missouri for the Federal cause, was killed in the battle.

Lyon was opposed by an army made up of the Missouri State Guard, commanded by General Sterling Price, and the Confederate Army of the West, commanded by Brigadier General Ben McCulloch.

Lyon's plan was too complex: to send a large column on a flanking march to appear behind the Rebel forces deployed near Wilson's Creek; while this manoeuvre was being carried out, Lyon himself would attack the Rebel front with his main body. He counted on his better-equipped troops to force a successful end to the battle.

In the event, the flanking column was stopped and defeated by McCulloch's Rebels, while Price's Missourians fended off Lyon's assaults. As the Rebels gained the upper hand in the battle, Lyon was killed attempting to rally his men. The Federal forces kept better order than they had managed during their retreat from Bull Run. Missouri is now territorially, as well as politically, divided.

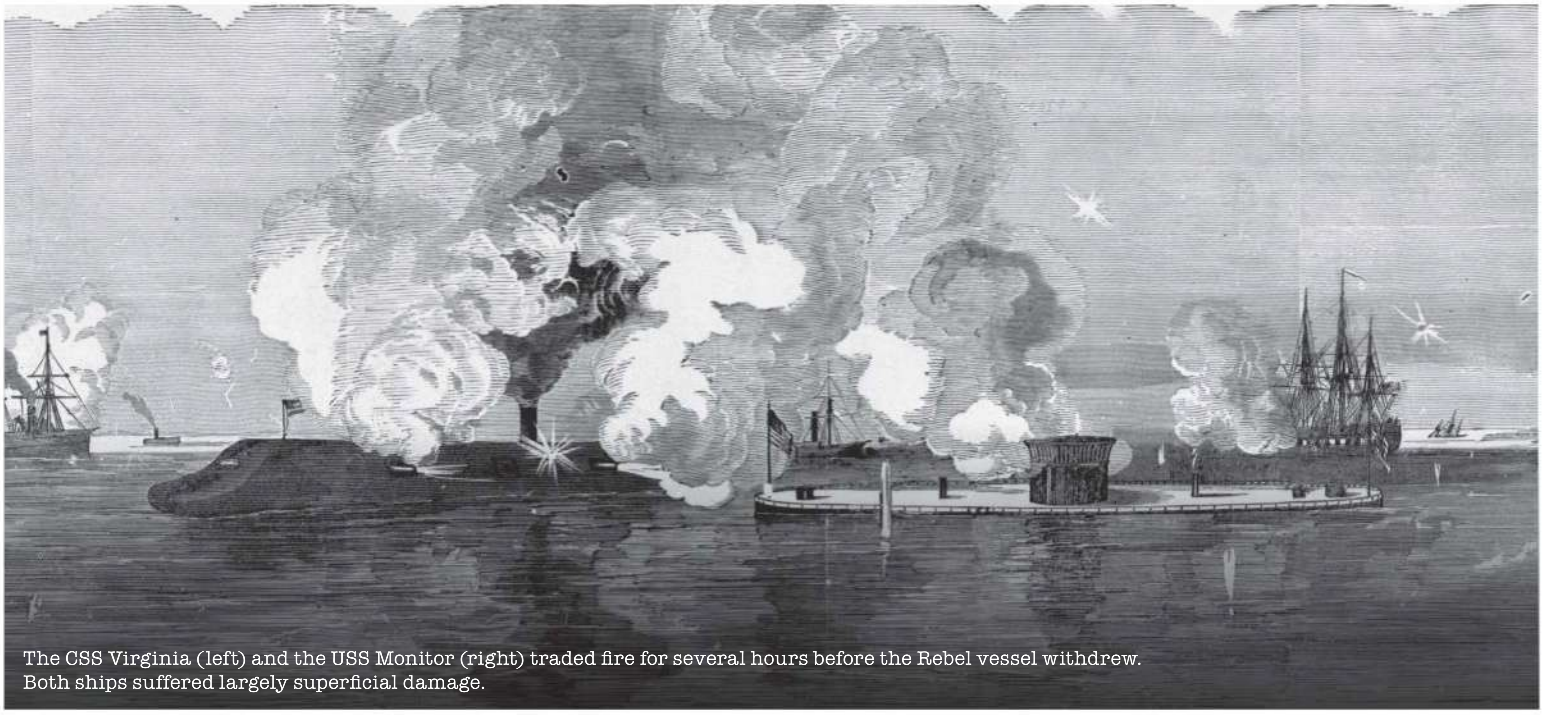


Troops under General Lyon (Federal) and Colonel Sigel (Rebel) at the Battle of Wilson's Creek on 10 August 1861.

IN BRIEF

The Federal Navy scored a major strategic success on 7 November 1861 when a squadron of ships bombarded two Rebel forts at the entrance to Port Royal Sound in South Carolina. Troops were then landed from accompanying transports to occupy the forts and take control of the surrounding area. A naval base was established which enabled the blockade of the southern ports in South Carolina and Georgia, proclaimed by President Lincoln on 19 April to become effective.

Ironclads fight for first time



The CSS Virginia (left) and the USS Monitor (right) traded fire for several hours before the Rebel vessel withdrew. Both ships suffered largely superficial damage.

On 9 March 1862, two ships armoured with iron on their hulls engaged in combat, the first such fight in history. The CSS Virginia of the Rebel navy and the USS Monitor of the Federal navy traded shots for around three hours before the Virginia broke off the action and retired to its base at Norfolk, Virginia.

The Virginia went into action for the first time only the previous day, 8 March, having been built using the hull of the USS Merrimack, a frigate that had been scuttled and burned along with many of the other buildings and stores of Gosport Navy Yard on 19–20 April 1861. But the engines and hull of the Merrimack were still seaworthy, so Rebel builders erected a wooden roof sheathed in iron plates on the hull. The ship was armed with ten guns: one in the bow, one astern and the remainder as broadsides. A iron ram 2 feet (60 cm) long was installed on the bow.

Having been rebuilt, the Virginia was taken almost straightaway into action by her commander, Franklin Buchanan. Buchanan sailed her out of Norfolk with the high tide on 8 March 1862 and headed for the nearest enemy, five large wooden warships that lay to the north in Hampton Roads. She sank two of them, the Cumberland and the Congress. With the tide falling fast, two of the other Federal vessels ran aground, but the Virginia drew too much water to finish them off. She retreated to Norfolk, in order to repair leaks, planning to return as the tide rose the next day.

Overnight, however, the Federal answer to the Virginia arrived. The USS Monitor was a more innovative ship, having been designed as an ironclad from the very beginning, and was equipped with a revolving turret in place of the traditional broadside armament.

The battle began around 9 a.m. on 9 March. The Virginia approached the USS Minnesota, a wooden ship like the Cumberland and Congress, that had run aground. The Monitor was all that stood between the two ships, but it proved to be enough. The Virginia's smokestack had been riddled by shots the day before, making it difficult to keep her engine's boilers running, thus allowing the Monitor to out-manoeuvre her. Quickly discovering that her guns could not penetrate the armour of the Monitor, the Virginia tried to ram, but the boiler problems and the lack of the 2-foot- (60-cm-) long ram (lost in the Cumberland the day before) meant the blow had little effect. The battle ended in a draw.

> “THE USS MONITOR WAS A MORE INNOVATIVE SHIP, HAVING BEEN DESIGNED AS AN IRONCLAD FROM THE VERY BEGINNING”

Outnumbered Federal force crushes Rebel foe

General Samuel Curtis defeated a Rebel force superior in numbers at the Battle of Pea Ridge, in northern Arkansas, on

A Federal corporal in full equipment. The Rebels could only envy such plenty.

8 March 1862. The effect of this victory has been to eliminate any serious threat to take Missouri out of the Federal.

Curtis's opponent was General Earl Van Dorn, who combined three forces in the Confederate Army of the West: General Ben McCulloch's Arkansas and Texas division, General Sterling Price's Missouri troops and a brigade of Native Americans recruited from the Choctaw, Creek and Cherokee who lived in Indian territory to the west of Arkansas. Curtis had advanced against Price during the previous winter, forcing the badly supplied Missouri contingent out of the state and into northern Arkansas.

Van Dorn devised a plan involving a night march that would place his force to the rear of Curtis's men. Although he was successful, he then divided his army hoping to turn both flanks of the Federal position, but Curtis split his forces as well. The force led by McCulloch was stopped trying to attack the main Federal position well before Van Dorn and the rest of the army was in action. McCulloch and his second-in-command were killed, and his third-in-command was captured.

Van Dorn and Price, meanwhile, did not press their attacks hard enough, in part owing to the clouds of gunpowder smoke that hung over the battlefield – neither side could see the other properly.

By nightfall, the Rebels had gained nothing, and were short of supplies, with the Federal Army between them and their supply wagons. The Federal attack the next day caused the Rebels to retreat in disarray.

Two Rebels, one holding a pistol, photographed as a memento for their families. In 1861, in both north and south, Americans rushed to volunteer on the assumption the war would be short.

IN BRIEF

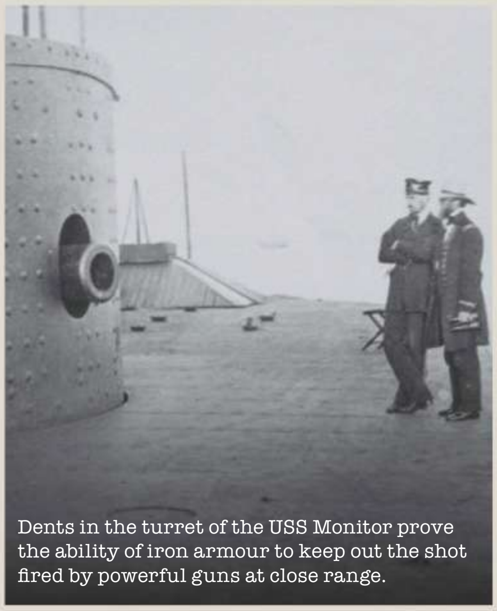
- General Ulysses S. Grant achieved a key victory by capturing two Rebel forts in Tennessee. The first of these forts, Fort Henry, surrendered on 6 February 1862, after gunboats had subjected it to a lengthy bombardment. At nearby Fort Donelson, after a Rebel attempt to break out had failed, its commander, General John B. Floyd, escaped from the fort, leaving most of his troops to surrender to Grant on 16 February.

- A sizeable French fleet, accompanied by British allies, joined Spanish forces at the Mexican city of Vera Cruz on 8 January 1862, launching an invasion of Mexico at a time when the United States was engaged in its Civil War. The French, British and Spanish were seeking a resumption of Mexican payments on foreign debt, which the Mexican government had suspended on 17 July 1861.

> “THE FRENCH, BRITISH AND SPANISH WERE SEEKING A RESUMPTION OF MEXICAN PAYMENTS ON FOREIGN DEBT”

Ironclads and the steel navy

The celebrated Battle of Hampton Roads started a new era in naval warfare, in which armour was challenged by guns and shells, and which persisted until the development of aircraft and submarines altered combat at sea still further.



Dents in the turret of the USS Monitor prove the ability of iron armour to keep out the shot fired by powerful guns at close range.

The CSS Virginia and the USS Monitor were by no means the first ironclad warships. The first such vessels, built by the French Navy and used in the Crimean War, were floating batteries – barges mounting guns whose sides were covered with iron plates. It was a simple step to add the plates to a steam warship, and the French built the first such ironclad, the broadside ironclad Gloire, one of a class of three ships.

When the Gloire entered service in 1860, the British Royal Navy was the largest fleet in the world. They were aware of what the French were building and were already at work on their own version. Whereas the French ship was a wooden-hulled ship with armour plates arranged in a belt along her sides – like the floating batteries – the British class, the Warriors, were iron-hulled with a similar, if shorter, belt of armour.

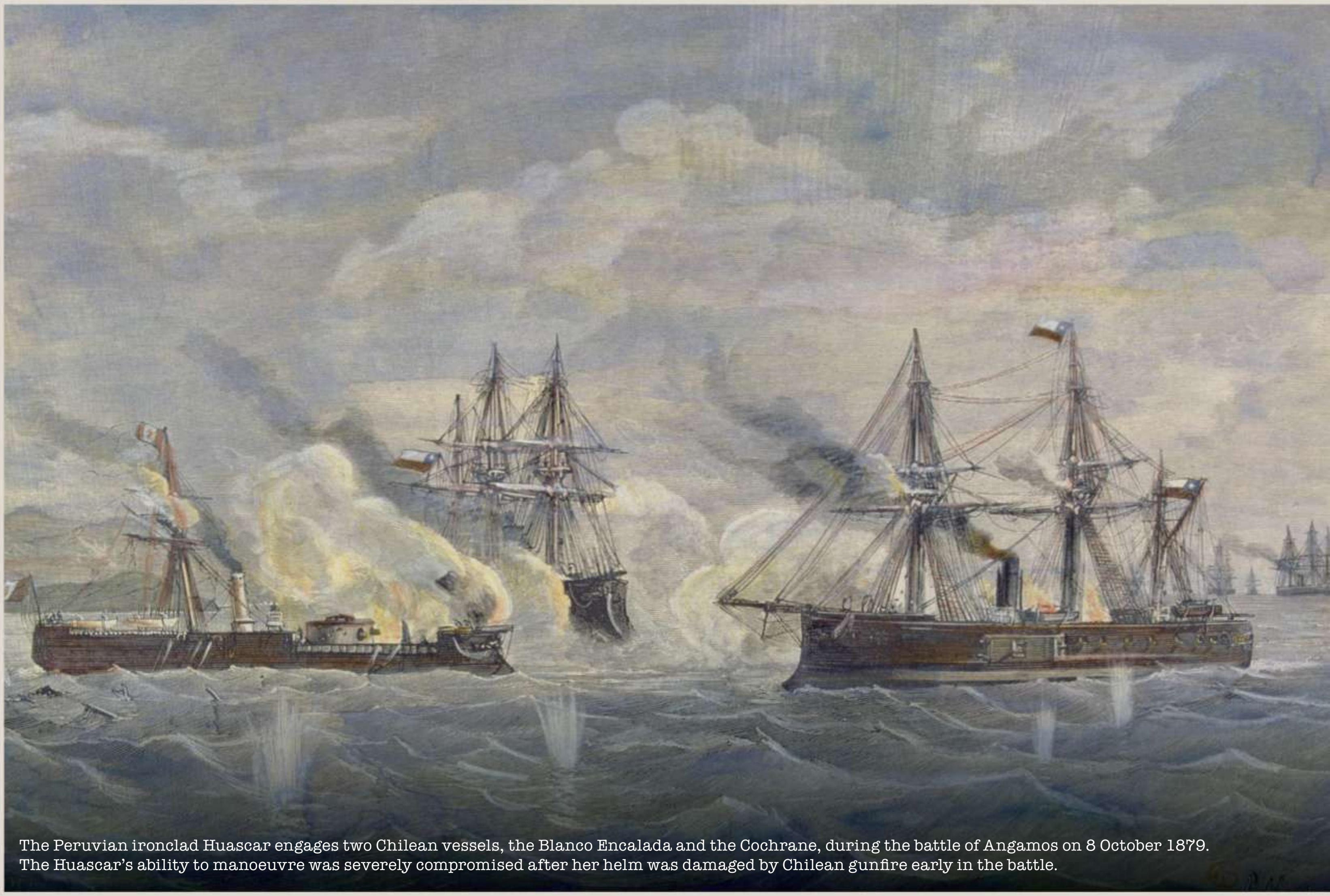
The use of armour on warships coincided with a number of other important changes to naval warfare, each change having some influence on the others. The development of naval shell guns, first used at the Battle of Sinope in 1853, seemed to threaten wooden ships. Armour was the counter to this, but the long belts needed to cover the length of a ship's side were expensive. It was more efficient to put the guns in a turret that could swivel to cover both broadsides of the ship, which reduced the number of guns needed and allowed the armour protection to cover them completely. The first warship to have a turret, the USS Monitor, also was involved in the first battle between ironclad warships, the Battle of Hampton Roads in March 1862.

The cumulative effect of all these changes was ultimately to revolutionize ship design. At one end of this revolution lay the Battle of Sinope, fought between ships clearly resembling the battle fleet led by Lord Nelson at Trafalgar; at the other end lay HMS Colossus, which entered service in 1886 and was a turret ship almost completely without masts.

Although the American Civil War was the first conflict to feature a battle between ironclads, the lack of a significant iron industry in the Rebel states, and of any substantial pre-war navy, meant that most battles involving ironclads involved no more than one or two Rebel ones. The main naval battles all involved a fleet attacking a defended port, such as the battles of New Orleans (1862), Mobile Bay and Charleston (both 1864). The first battle between fleets of ironclads occurred in European waters, during the Seven Weeks' War in 1866 which involved Austria, Prussia and Italy. The Italians had 12 ironclads, the Austro-Hungarians seven. Since gunfire seemed to lack the penetration against armoured vessels sufficient to sink them, success came from ramming enemy ships. The Austro-Hungarians sank two of the Italian ironclads, while suffering no losses, although ships on both sides were badly damaged by gunfire. The Austro-Hungarians' ramming tactics influenced naval warfare for decades after.

There were few battles involving ironclads in the years that followed, although those that did occur were carefully studied. One engagement, the Battle of Callao, between Peru and Spain, resembled those of Mobile Bay or Charleston in the American Civil War, with a fleet of ocean-going ships attacking a defended port. Both sides had ironclads, but these did not engage each other heavily. In 1877 a battle between two British wooden warships and the mutinous crew of Peruvian ironclad Huascar ended in a draw. The effectiveness of iron armour was clear. Over 400 shots were fired at the Huascar, 50 struck her, but only one penetrated the armour. Peru was involved in the next major actions

Part of the crew of the USS Monitor gets some fresh air in port. The Monitor warship suffered from poor ventilation, and its low freeboard made it unsuitable for operations in high seas.



The Peruvian ironclad Huascar engages two Chilean vessels, the Blanco Encalada and the Cochrane, during the battle of Angamos on 8 October 1879. The Huascar's ability to manoeuvre was severely compromised after her helm was damaged by Chilean gunfire early in the battle.

involving ironclads, in the War of the Pacific (1879-84). The Huascar engaged her Chilean opponents in two battles, the naval Battle of Iquique and the Battle of Angamos. Only the second involved ironclads on both sides and ended with the capture of the Huascar, which was heavily outnumbered six ships to one.

The lack of much combat meant that different theories were applied to ship design, making the Ironclad Era one of the most fascinating to look at in terms of sheer visual variety. The arrangement of the guns was a major matter for debate. Some ships were fitted with turrets, while others had either a broadside battery or some kind of central area known as a barbette or citadel, with the upper deck often considerably narrower than the main deck to allow a degree of gunfire forward. Sailing rigs were not retained out of love of tradition, as is sometimes implied. For most ships, the availability of coal to feed their boilers was by no means assured if they were far from their home ports, so sails provided extra motive power that might otherwise have been lacking.

By the time the Huascar was captured, the revolution in naval affairs had advanced further. The advantages of iron hulls over non-iron ones were well established – the main disadvantage lay in the great weight of iron, which kept the speeds of ships low. However, steel provided a lighter alternative to iron, with most of the same advantages, and naval shipbuilders began adopting steel hulls for their designs. The first large steel-hulled ship was the French battleship Redoutable, which was completed in 1878.

> “THE FIRST NAVAL ACTION INVOLVING A STEEL WARSHIP WAS FOUGHT DURING A CIVIL WAR IN BRAZIL IN APRIL 1894, WHEN A TORPEDO SANK THE BATTLESHIP AQUIDABAN DURING A NIGHT ACTION”

The first naval action involving a steel warship was fought during a civil war in Brazil in April 1894, when a torpedo sank the battleship Aquidaban during a night action. Later that same year came the first battle between steel warships, during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, when two small squadrons fought off the island of Phung-Do in the Yellow Sea in July 1894. The Japanese sank one vessel and damaged the other. The result was never in doubt, for the Japanese ships were more modern. A larger fleet engagement occurred in September at Yalu, when the Japanese defeated a Chinese fleet containing two battleships, although at heavy loss to themselves.

Grant triumphs in bloodbath

In a fierce two-day battle on 6–7 April 1862, General Ulysses S. Grant and his Federal army triumphed over an attacking Rebel force that had initially caught him at his camp next to the Tennessee river by complete surprise. The Rebel army is in retreat toward its main military base in the area, Corinth, Mississippi, having lost its commanding officer, General Albert Sidney Johnston, mortally wounded on the battlefield.

Shiloh has been the largest battle in the history of the United States, involving a total of 65,000 Federal soldiers and 45,000 Rebels, with over 20,000 killed, wounded or missing.

When the Rebel attack began on the morning of 6 April, it overran regiments and brigades that were in no position to give one another mutual support. Rebel divisions, however, had become mixed up and were unable to press home their advantage effectively. The fighting began before dawn, and as the sun came up the intensity redoubled, with the thump of artillery joining in the roar of muskets.

The Federal forces grudgingly gave ground toward their main base at Pittsburg Landing. Local successes opened gaps in the Federal lines as regiments withdrew under heavy pressure. Some of the most ferocious fighting occurred in an area that became known as the Hornet's Nest, where a division of Federal troops under General Benjamin Prentiss resisted from a sunken road that gave them some protection from the Rebel artillery. Prentiss and his men withstood twelve Rebel charges and being bombarded by over sixty pieces of artillery. Johnston was shot during the battle here, but instead of getting prompt medical attention, which might have saved his life, he remained fighting and bled to death.

The fighting at the Hornet's Nest lasted until about 5.30 p.m., when the 2,000 survivors (including Prentiss) surrendered. The main Federal line of defence had been established in the rear, where reinforcements were arriving from the sixth of Grant's divisions and Don Carlos Buell's nearby Army of the Ohio. As night fell, the battle petered out and the two armies rested in the full knowledge that it would be resumed the next day, in spite of them both having suffered casualties far beyond their expectations. Federal General Sherman reportedly said to Grant, "Well Grant, we've had the devil's own day, haven't we?" Grant replied: "Yes. Lick 'em tomorrow, though."

The Rebels had no chance to renew their attacks in the morning. The Federal forces struck first, well supported with artillery. General P.G.T. Beauregard, who succeeded Johnston, withstood the onslaught for half the day, before ordering his men to withdraw in the early afternoon. The dispirited Rebels retreated back to Corinth, the apparent success of the first day having vanished overnight.

A Federal battery deployed in the woods near Pittsburg Landing in 1862. Federal guns broke up the Rebel attacks and saved the day for Federal commander General Ulysses S. Grant.

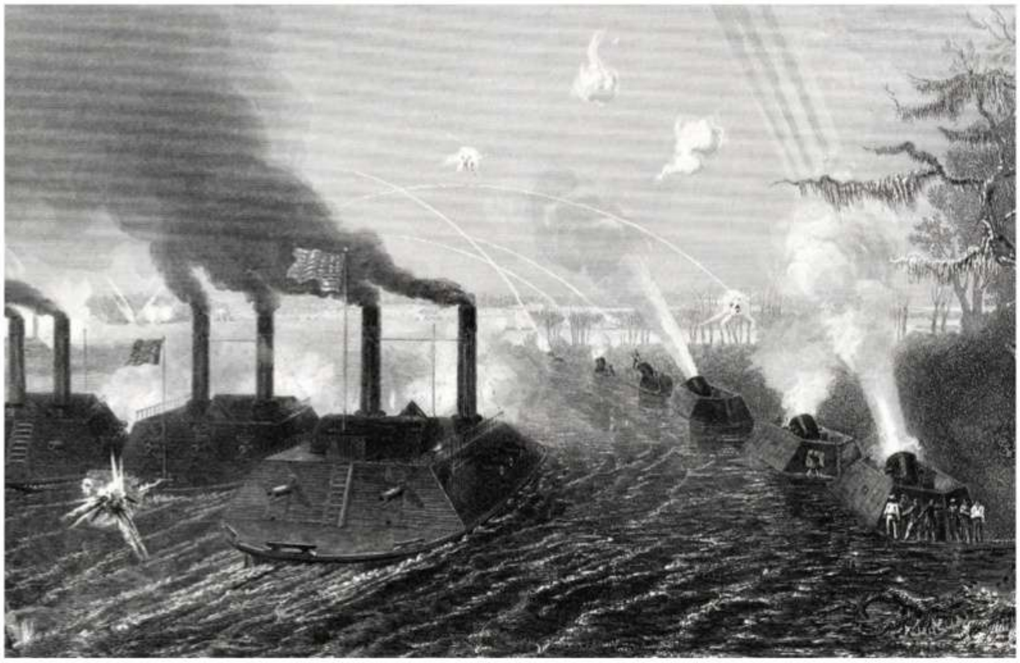
Union secures upper Mississippi river

Federal forces have co-operated to secure control of the Mississippi river between St Louis and Memphis, a major setback to Rebel ambitions in Missouri and western Kentucky. The fall of mutually supporting Rebel positions at Island No. 10 in the Mississippi river and New Madrid, Missouri, in 1862 opened the way to Memphis for the powerful Federal gunboat fleet.

The Federal advance on New Madrid, Missouri was in part motivated by the desire to disrupt a planned meeting of the state's secessionist legislators on 3 March. General John Pope took 12,000 troops and advanced from Commerce, Missouri at the beginning of the month. However, the Rebel garrison was dug in and received some support from a flotilla of gunboats on the Mississippi, which was able to subject the single Federal probe made by Pope's forces to a ferocious crossfire. Pope called for siege guns to support him.

A fierce artillery duel resulted in a loss of nerve by the Rebel commanders, who chose to evacuate New Madrid on 13 March.

As well as New Madrid, Island No. 10 was also a target for Federal operations, in this case by a flotilla of ironclad gunboats and mortar rafts. The Rebels had established three batteries on the island, and also a fort known as The Redan on the opposite Tennessee shore. The Redan defeated an attempt by three of the gunboats to batter it into submission on 17 March. A pause in operations then ensued until, on two nights in early April, two gunboats successfully ran past the Rebel guns at Island No. 10 and reached New Madrid, where they joined with Pope's forces. During the preceding month, Federal engineers had built a canal through a bend in the river, allowing four transport ships to pass below the island. With gunboats and transports, Pope was able to cross the Mississippi and approach Island No. 10 from the eastern shore. The Rebel forces in the area, now cut off from reinforcement or retreat, surrendered on 8 April.



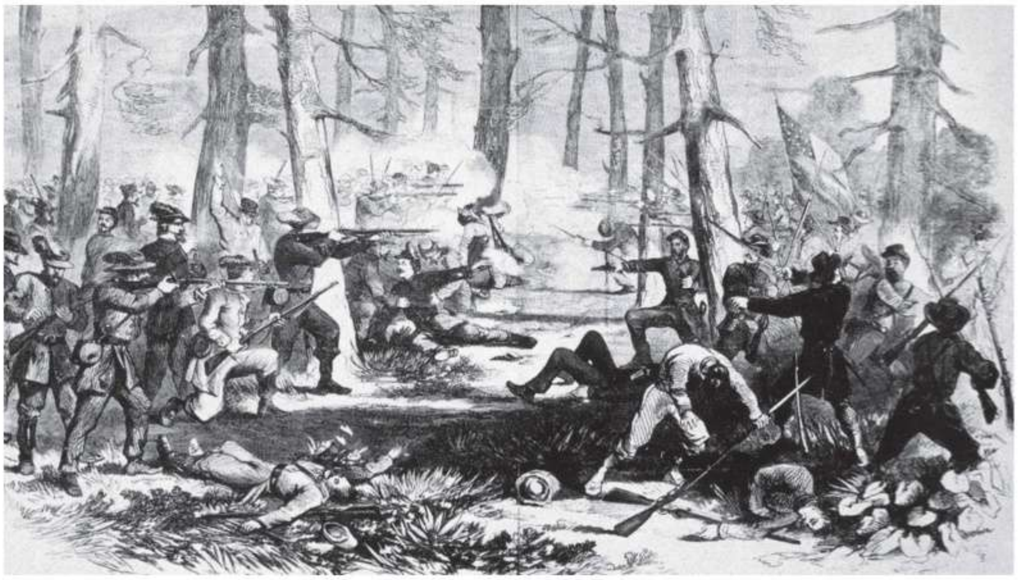
Federal ironclads and mortar gunboats shell Island No. 10 in the Mississippi river.

Jackson beaten at Kernstown

General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, whose determination saved the day for the Confederacy at the Battle of Bull Run last year, suffered a repulse when he attacked Federal forces at Kernstown, Virginia, on 23 March 1862.

Jackson's attack attempted to turn the right flank of the Federal position. However, he lacked the strength to achieve a decisive breakthrough and was stalled by heavy Federal musketry. In the end, the brigade commander on the spot called the attack off, and Jackson was forced to retire from the field.

Although it was not clear at the time, the battle was in fact a strategic victory for the Confederacy. The forces Jackson engaged were intended to join the Army of the Potomac, but were instead kept in the Shenandoah Valley to prevent Jackson from attacking Washington DC.



Federal and Rebel troops trade volleys in the woods near Kernstown on 29 March 1862. The Rebels were forced to retreat.

Farragut's daring wins New Orleans

The largest city in the Rebel states, New Orleans, was brought under the guns of a Federal fleet after Commodore David Farragut succeeded in taking his ocean-going ships up the Mississippi river to the site of the city on 24 April 1862.

The plan of the attack was the idea of Farragut's foster brother, Commander David Dixon Porter, who presented the idea to US Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, in November 1861. The key to Porter's scheme rested on a flotilla of schooners that would use 13-inch mortars to bombard the forts guarding the approach up the Mississippi to the Rebel city. Forts St Philip and Jackson stood on opposite banks and theoretically blocked the river, with the crossfire of their guns, 70 miles (113 km) from New Orleans. Porter's bombardment was intended to do sufficient damage to the batteries so that the approaching squadron could run past any remaining defenders and reach the docks of the city.

Farragut began the operation by getting his ocean-going warships, of which he had 20, into the Mississippi by entering the river's "passes" – the five outlets into the Gulf of Mexico – on 7 March 1862. Farragut's movement was slowed by the mud of the Mississippi, which gathered in the passes, requiring constant dredging to allow ships with a draught of 19 feet (6 m) to enter. It took two weeks, with the help of the steamers intended to tow Porter's sailing schooners up the river, to get all his ships through the second pass.

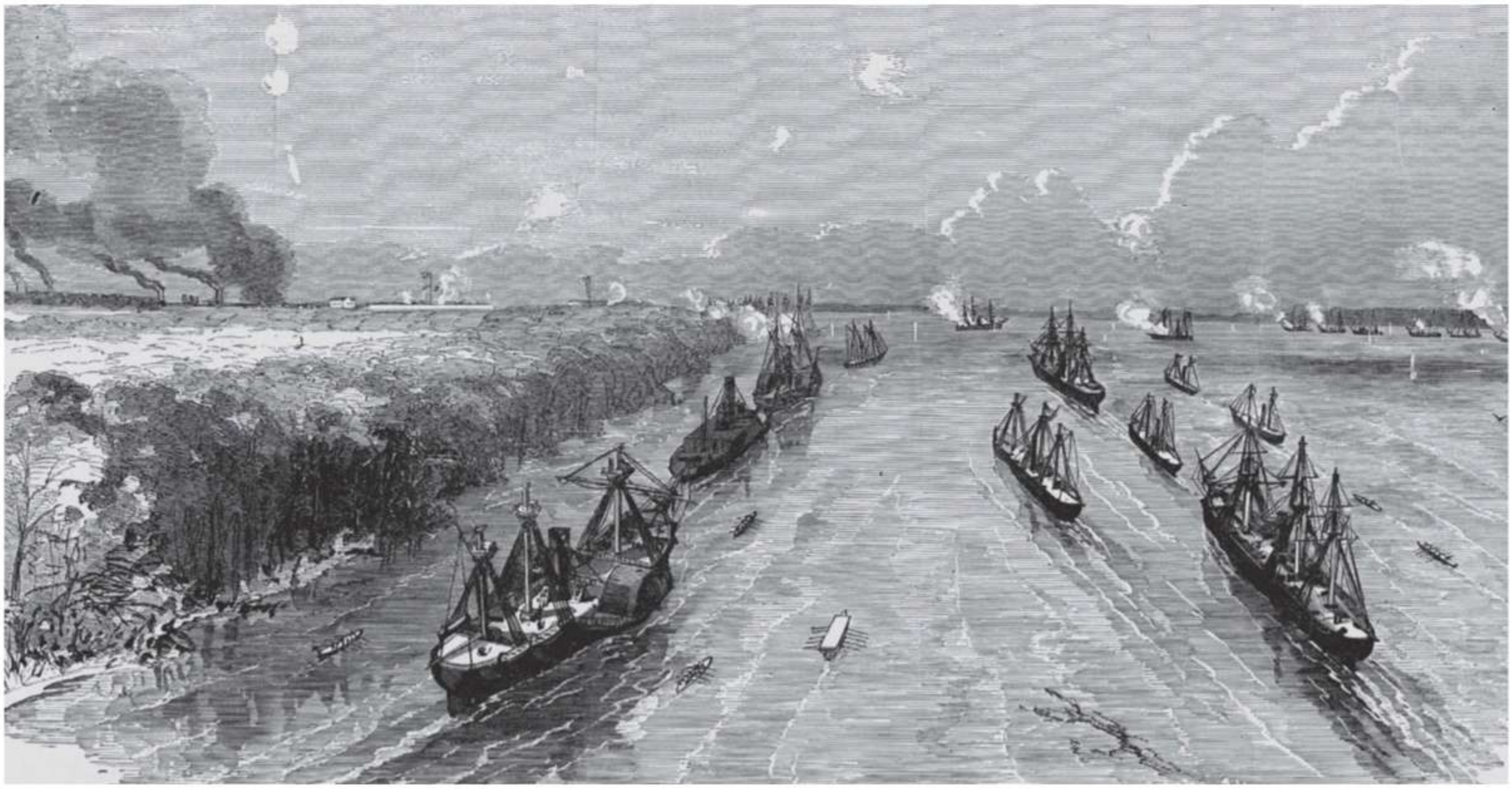
Porter's mortars went to work on 15 April with some ranging shots and the main bombardment began three days later, once all his barges had been moored in position. Porter expected the reduction of the two forts to take 48 hours, but in fact, the bombardment had still failed to achieve its desired effect after five days. Farragut now decided to take his ships to New Orleans by running past the forts under the cover of night. A barrier of chains and hulks the Rebels had erected to block the river was breached and Farragut ordered his ships to make ready for the run in the early morning of 24 April.

The sides of Farragut's ships were daubed with mud; anchor chains were hung along the hulls in order to provide some armour against enemy shot; and the decks were whitewashed to make objects more visible in the darkness.

The Rebel guns opened fire from the forts at 3.40 a.m. as the first Federal vessel was sighted. Porter's mortars also opened up, helping to drive some of the Rebel gunners away from their weapons.

Since the aim of the operation was to pass the forts, Farragut's ships did not spend time bombarding the Rebel positions, but instead concentrated their efforts on getting past them while sustaining as little damage to themselves as possible: they took measures such as sailing as close as 100 feet (30½ m) to the river bank, so that the Rebel guns could not be depressed at a low enough angle to cause any damage.

The naval battle that followed was more of a brawl than an organized engagement. The small Rebel flotilla had been built on the cheap, based on ramming rather than firepower, their tactics being to charge an enemy ship and then back off. These tactics were almost uniformly unsuccessful, as only one Federal vessel was sunk, while all but two of 11 Rebel vessels ended up being sunk or being ran aground.



Flag Officer David Farragut's fleet proceeds towards Forts Jackson and St Philip, guarding the approaches to New Orleans, on the night of 24/25 April 1862.

Winchester, Virginia, at the head of the Shenandoah Valley, changed hands several times during the first two years of the Civil War, and was the site of "Stonewall" Jackson's victory on 25 May 1862, which diverted Federal strength away from an attack on the Rebel capital at Richmond.

Stonewall Jackson's masterclass in valley

An outnumbered Rebel army in the Shenandoah Valley, comm-anded by General "Stonewall" Jackson, has outmanoeuvred and outfought three separate Federal forces during May and June 1862.

Jackson began his campaign by going in circles. He had been sent to the Shenandoah to keep Federal troops from reinforcing the army threatening the Rebel capital of Richmond. His first act therefore was to march as if he was going to Richmond, but he turned round, came back into the valley and attacked a Federal force at McDowell on 8 May.

Jackson then moved north up the valley, turned east then west again to strike at a detached Federal force at Front Royal on 23 May. He pursued a retreating Federal force to Winchester, at the head of the valley, and defeated it there on 25 May.

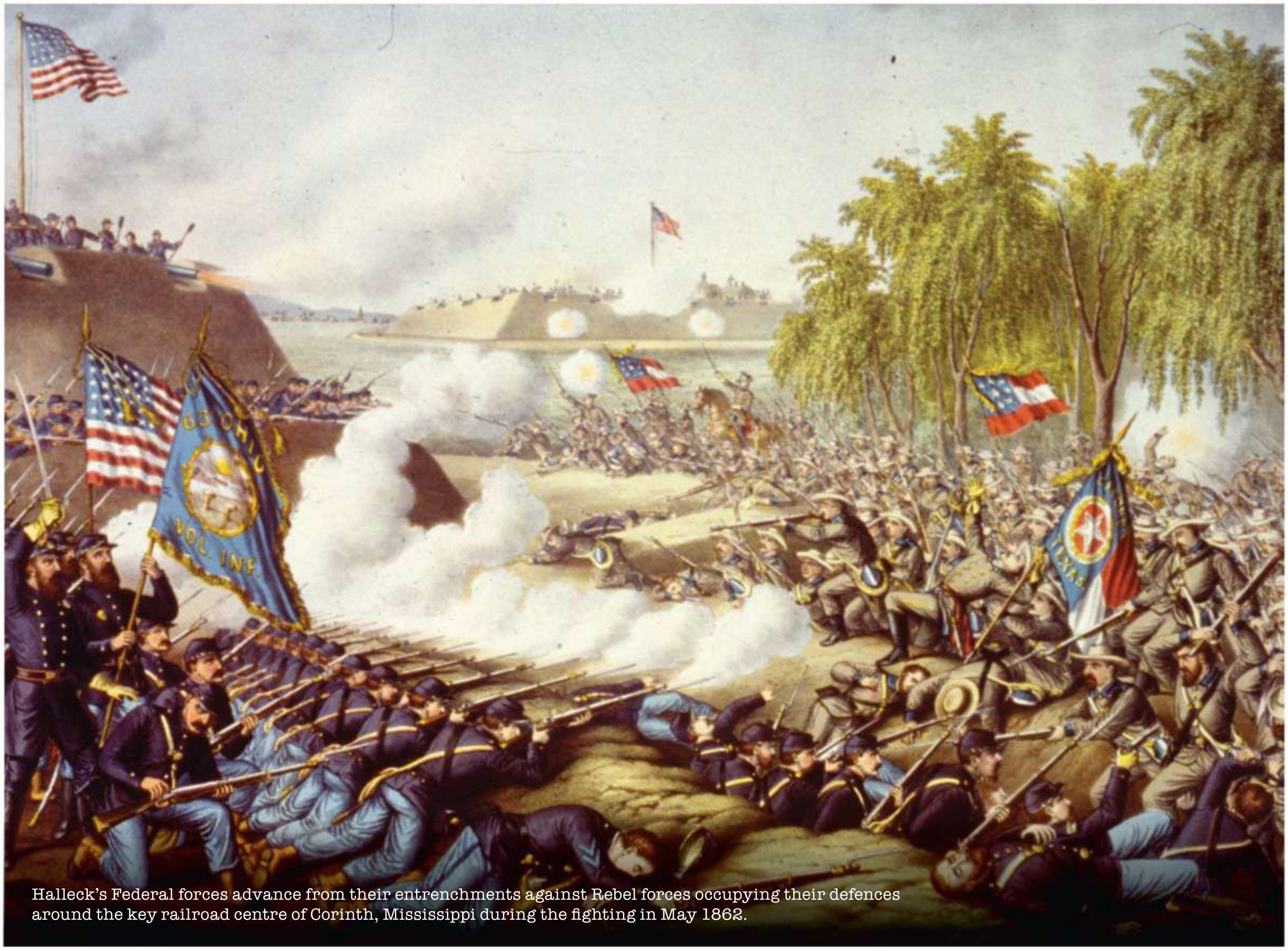
President Lincoln tried to set a trap, sending two separate forces into the valley, aiming to cut Jackson's line of retreat, but Jackson moved too fast for them and eluded the trap. He attacked one of the forces on 9 June at Port Republic, but his exhausted soldiers were unable to defeat the enemy quickly and Jackson did not press an attack against the other force as it withdrew northwards.

> "PRESIDENT LINCOLN TRIED TO SET A TRAP, SENDING TWO SEPARATE FORCES INTO THE VALLEY, AIMING TO CUT JACKSON'S LINE OF RETREAT"

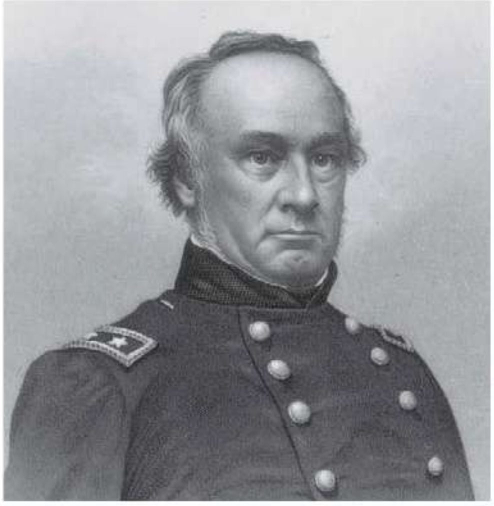
JACKSON'S SHENANDOAH VALLEY CAMPAIGN

DATES:	May-June 1862
COMBATANTS:	United States of America vs Rebel Confederate States of America
FORCES INVOLVED:	Union, 25,000; Rebels, 17,000
CASUALTIES:	Union, 7,000; Rebels, 2,500
RESULT:	Rebel victory

Methodical Halleck captures Corinth



Halleck's Federal forces advance from their entrenchments against Rebel forces occupying their defences around the key railroad centre of Corinth, Mississippi during the fighting in May 1862.



General Henry Halleck: "Old Brains" to his comrades in the US officer corps.

The continuing success of Federal forces in the Mississippi Valley region was crowned by the capture of Corinth, Mississippi, on 30 May 1862, following the evacuation of the town by the Rebel army based there. Major General Henry Halleck, the commander of the Department of the Mississippi, took personal command of the three armies deployed on the operation.

Halleck had very definite ideas about how war should be fought, and put them into practice in a short campaign that began on 29 April. His armies advanced slowly, stopping early each day to dig considerable entrenchments to protect them against a night or dawn attack that not only never came but was never considered by the Rebel commander, General P.G.T. Beauregard. Consequently, Halleck took over three weeks to march 20 miles (32 km) from his original base at Shiloh to Corinth.

Beauregard found his situation difficult. The area around Corinth was ill-suited to defence, and the place itself was unhealthy, with disease spreading rapidly among the large concentration of Rebel troops who had been there since retreating from Shiloh in early April. Furthermore, the many wounded from the Battle of Shiloh strained the limited hospital facilities there to breaking point. To make matters worse, food was running out and symptoms of malnutrition began to appear among Beauregard's men. The Rebel general therefore decided to abandon Corinth and did so on the night of 29/30 May, using a carefully crafted plan of deception that suggested he was about to attack.

MCCLELLAN'S PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN

DATES:	April-August 1862
COMBATANTS:	United States of America vs Rebel Confederate States of America
FORCES ENGAGEDED:	Union, 155,000; Rebels, 95,500
CASUALTIES:	Union, 15,849; Rebels, 20,614
RESULT:	Rebel victory

McClellan retreats, Richmond is saved

A massive Federal army commanded by General George C. McClellan suffered a minor defeat on 27 June 1862 at the Battle of Gaines' Mill and is now withdrawing from a position threatening the Rebel capital of Richmond, Virginia. McClellan's army of 90,000 had been less than 10 miles (16 km) away, beaten off by the aggressive operations of General Robert E. Lee's army of 65,000 men.

McClellan's attempt at Richmond began in late March when he began assembling his forces at Fort Monroe. However, on 5 April, the day after starting his advance from the fort, McClellan brought it to a halt when it encountered a small Rebel army, a little more than a tenth the size of his own, entrenched around Yorktown. McClellan prepared for a long siege, bringing up heavy artillery.

On 3 May, two days before McClellan's grand bombardment, General Joseph E. Johnston ordered the Rebel force to withdraw. McClellan now moved much of his forces by water to a new position to the north-east of Richmond, either side of the Chickahominy river. Yet again he failed to attack. Instead, at the end of May, General Johnston struck at the left of McClellan's position, where a kink in the Federal line allowed an attack on three sides. The Battle of Fair Oaks, on 31 May, was handled badly by the Rebels, who were unable to co-ordinate their attacks effectively. A substantial part of the troops available did not even participate in the battle. Worse still, General Johnston was badly wounded and a substitute commander attempted to continue the fight on a second day. That same day, 1 June 1862, a new commander was appointed to the Army of Northern Virginia, General Robert E. Lee, who broke off the battle, with both sides claiming victory. McClellan shifted most of his army to the south side of the Chickahominy.

> "A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF THE TROOPS AVAILABLE DID NOT EVEN PARTICIPATE IN THE BATTLE"

Lee reorganized his forces, and sent his cavalry on a spectacular, if ineffective, ride around the Federal army between 12 and 15 June. McClellan responded by preparing to move his army again. He also ordered a limited assault on Rebel positions near Fair Oaks on 25 June. This was the beginning of the Seven Days' Battles. The Battle of Oak Grove, near Fair Oaks, was inconclusive, although Federal troops occupied the battlefield at the close of the day.

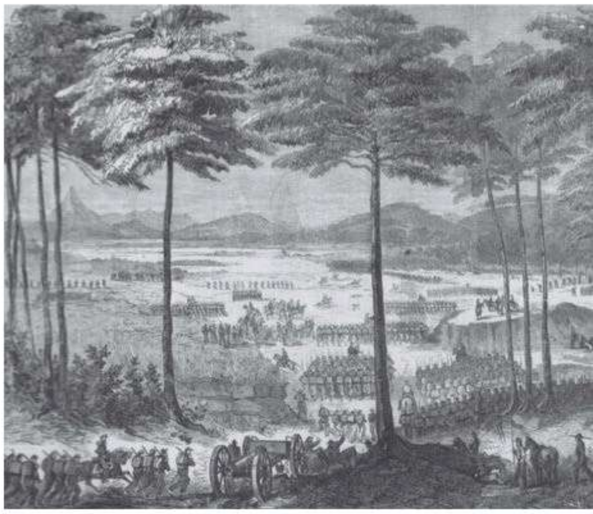
Lee had been planning an attack of his own and McClellan's limited operation did nothing to push him off his stride. On 26 June he struck at the Union V Corps, attacking around Mechanicsville, Virginia. Lee's complicated plan quickly unravelled and Stonewall Jackson, who had recently arrived from the Shenandoah Valley, was inexplicably timid so that the Rebel attack failed to achieve anything. However, Lee did not give up and renewed the assault the next day. The third battle of the Seven Days, Gaines' Mill, lasted the whole day and ended with the Federal line collapsing. The Union V Corps retreated from the battlefield.

Mexicans celebrate defeat of French

On 5 May 1862, a Mexican army defeated the French invaders at the Battle of Puebla, to the east of Mexico City, forcing them to retire towards Vera Cruz, the coastal city serving as the base for a French invasion of Mexico. On hearing of the defeat, Napoleon III decided to send sizeable reinforcements to the army in Vera Cruz.

The Mexicans had required the French army – which had been allowed to move inland in order to avoid the yellow fever that was endemic around Vera Cruz – to return to that coastal city. Only sick soldiers were allowed to remain in the highlands. However, General Charles Latrille de Lorencez decided to attack the Mexicans when they claimed some of these sick soldiers were healthy.

The French army, about 6,000 strong, forced the pass at Las Cumbres de Alcuzingo on 28 April 1862. General Lorencez then advanced on the town of Puebla, where General Ignacio Zaragoza had taken up a strong defensive position on the Cerro de Guadalupe, with its fort and fortified convent. Although Zaragoza had about 4,000 soldiers, many of them poorly trained militia, the French attack failed, their only success coming in driving off a Mexican cavalry attack that attempted to return a retreat into a rout.



French soldiers deploy for battle against the Mexicans, the infantry advancing in companies.

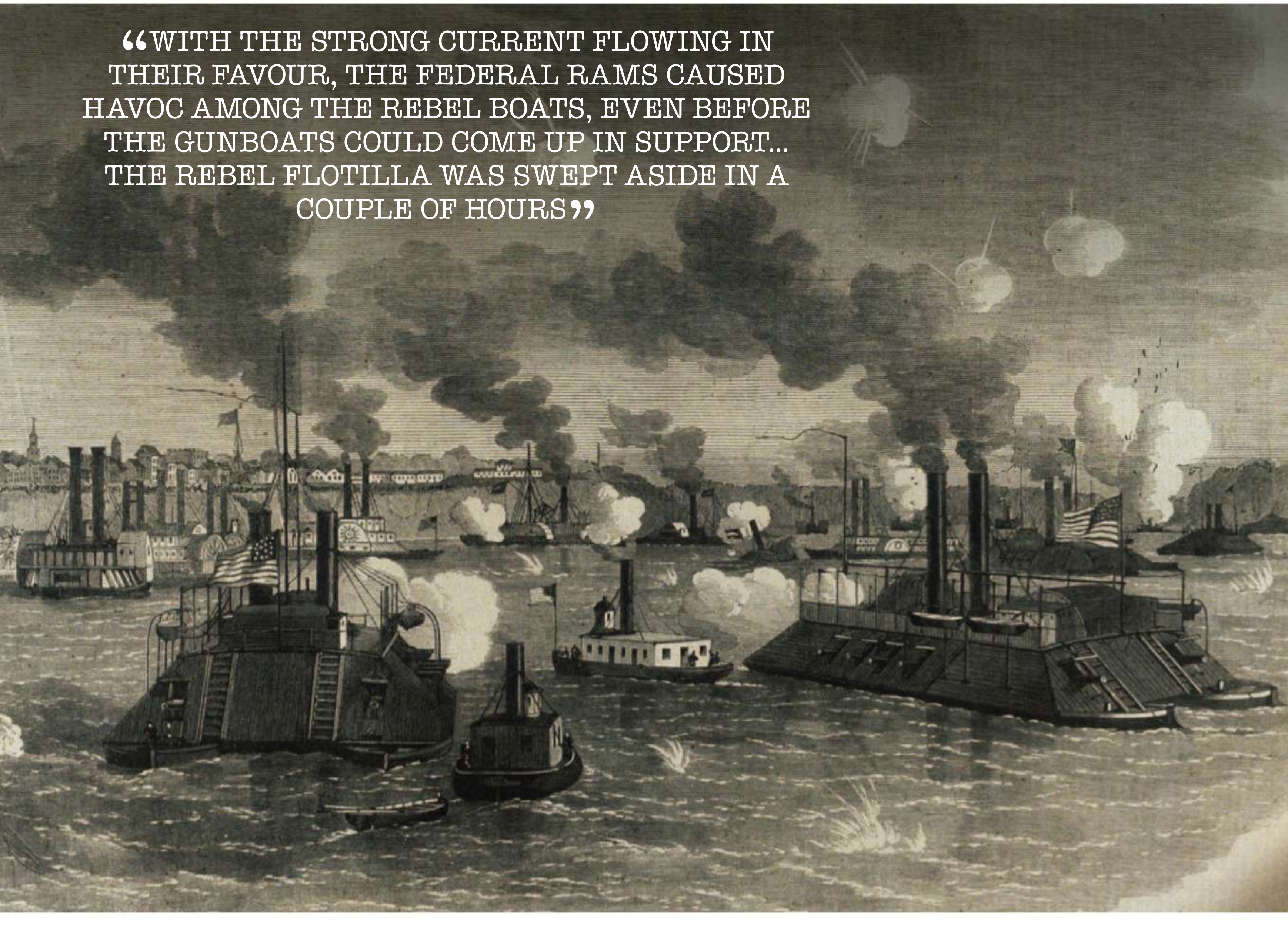
Memphis falls to gunboats

Following a victory over a Rebel flotilla of river gunboats, men from Federal vessels entered the city of Memphis, Tennessee, and raised the Stars and Stripes on 6 June 1862.

After the Federal capture of Island No. 10, the city of Memphis was the next key objective along the Mississippi river. Federal armies had already advanced along the Tennessee river to threaten the key railway junction at Corinth, Mississippi, through which passed the most direct railway connecting Memphis with the eastern Confederate States. However, any Federal advance along the Mississippi had to contend with two Rebel forts: Fort Randolph and Fort Pillow. Pillow was the further north of the two and was threatened by Federal gunboats. However, on 10 May the main Rebel riverine flotilla, the River Defense Fleet, attacked and badly damaged two Federal vessels by ramming, thus delaying their approach to the fort. Events on land led to the abandonment of the forts, following the evacuation of Corinth in late May; however, the Rebels remained confident that their boats would defeat any attempt to advance along the river as far as Memphis.

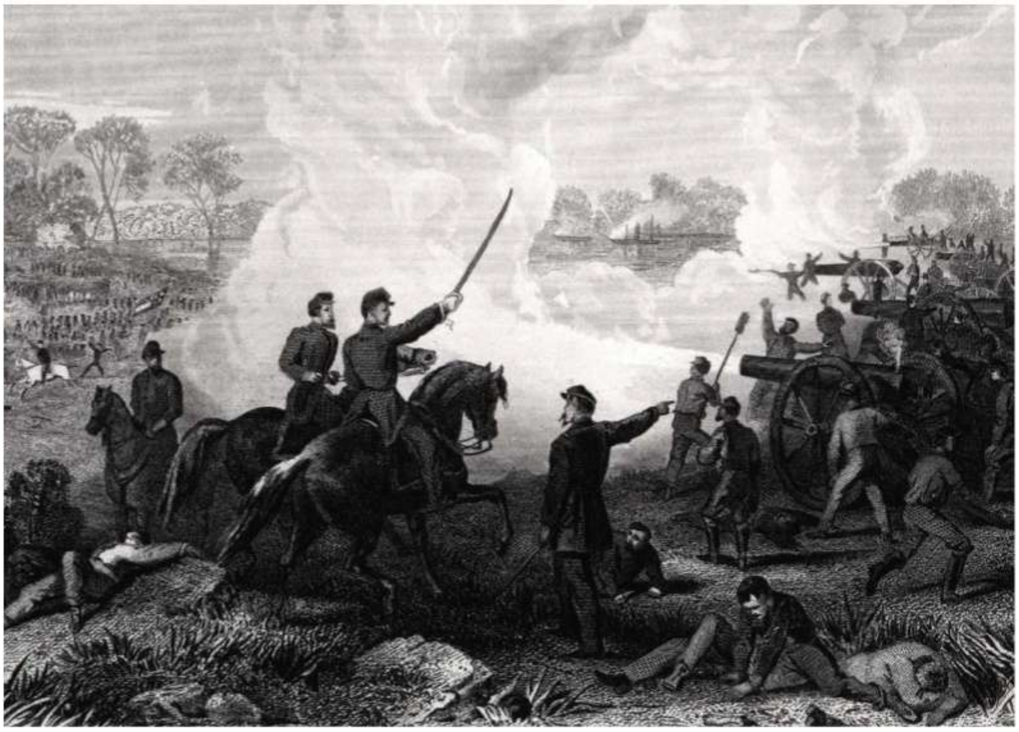
On 6 June, the Federal squadrons advanced on the city, with two boats designed as rams augmenting the main squadron of gunboats. The Rebels had no idea these rams existed, anticipating using ramming tactics themselves to defeat the Federal flotilla before its superiority in firepower could take effect. With the strong current flowing in their favour, the Federal rams caused havoc among the Rebel boats, even before the gunboats could come up in support. The Rebel flotilla was swept aside in hours and it only needed four men to enter Memphis to reclaim the city for the Federal government.

> “WITH THE STRONG CURRENT FLOWING IN THEIR FAVOUR, THE FEDERAL RAMS CAUSED HAVOC AMONG THE REBEL BOATS, EVEN BEFORE THE GUNBOATS COULD COME UP IN SUPPORT... THE REBEL FLOTILLA WAS SWEPT ASIDE IN A COUPLE OF HOURS”



The Federal rams of Colonel Charles Ellet and the armoured gunboats of Captain Charles Davis engage a Rebel flotilla off Memphis, Tennessee, on 6 June 1862.

Lee loses battles, wins campaign



The Federal army massed its batteries to provide the firepower that blunted the Rebel assaults during the battle of Malvern Hill on 1 July 1862.

Rebel General Robert E. Lee has achieved a strategic triumph over his opponent, Federal commander George McClellan, in spite of losing three battles in succession.

After the Battle of Gaines' Mill, on 27 June, McClellan withdrew. On 29 June, Lee attacked a rearguard at Savage's Station but was beaten back.

Badly worded orders prevented Lee's next attack at White Oak Swamp on 30 June from being effective. The fighting carried on until darkness fell, when two Federal generals rode into the Rebel lines and were captured.

Lee's aim in these battles was to catch part of McClellan's army and destroy it, but the repeated failure of his orders to be carried out meant that he had now lost his chance. The Federal forces had reached Malvern Hill, which overlooked their main supply base at Harrison's Landing. Lee believed that one all-out assault might cause a Bull Run-style rout, which in the circumstances would be fatal to the Federal army. On 1 July 1862 the attack ran into a strong Federal position at Malvern Hill. Federal artillery in particular caused heavy casualties and Lee called off the operation, having lost many irreplaceable men and having gained little.

Over the three days of the retreat to Malvern Hill, the Federal forces lost around 11,000 casualties and prisoners, while the Rebels suffered nearly 10,000.

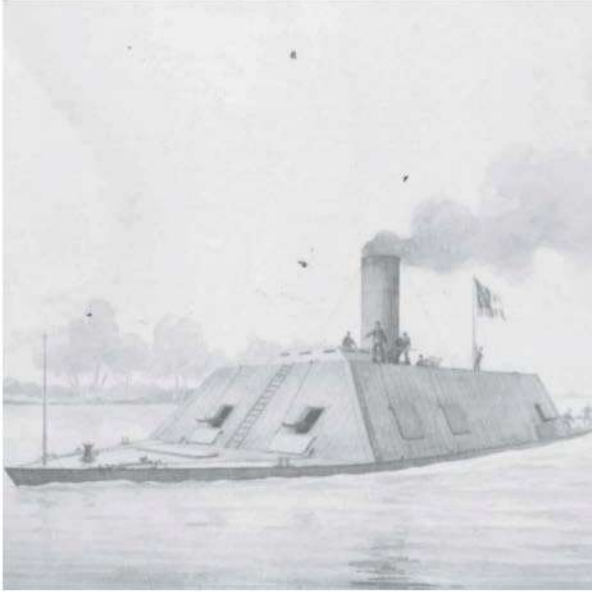
Vicksburg resists Farragut

Commodore David Farragut abandoned his operations around Vicksburg, Mississippi, on 24 July 1862 when the falling waters of summer threatened to ground his ocean-going vessels over 200 miles (322 km) upriver from the Gulf of Mexico. Vicksburg occupies a strong position, difficult to attack by land. With the city being the last major Rebel-held crossing point between the eastern and Trans-Mississippi regions, Federal strategists believed that the city might be vulnerable to attack from the river. Farragut was ordered to try.

> “ON 18 MAY, FARRAGUT TRIED TO CANNONADE THE REBEL BATTERIES DEFENDING VICKSBURG INTO SUBMISSION”

On 18 May, Farragut tried to cannonade the Rebel batteries defending Vicksburg into submission, but when this proved ineffective he temporarily withdrew his ships south again, returning over a month later, this time with the mortar schooners used against the New Orleans forts. He also intended to co-ordinate operations with the river gunboat force that had captured Memphis and sent word for to its commander, Commodore Charles H. Davis, to come down the river to join him.

Davis and his gunboats arrived on 1 July and for several days the two squadrons bombarded the Mississippi city, but to no real effect. Once the Federal commander in the area, General Henry Halleck, refused to attack by land, the attempt to take Vicksburg was doomed to failure.



In July 1862 the CSS Arkansas defied the near total Federal command of the Mississippi.

America's bloodiest day

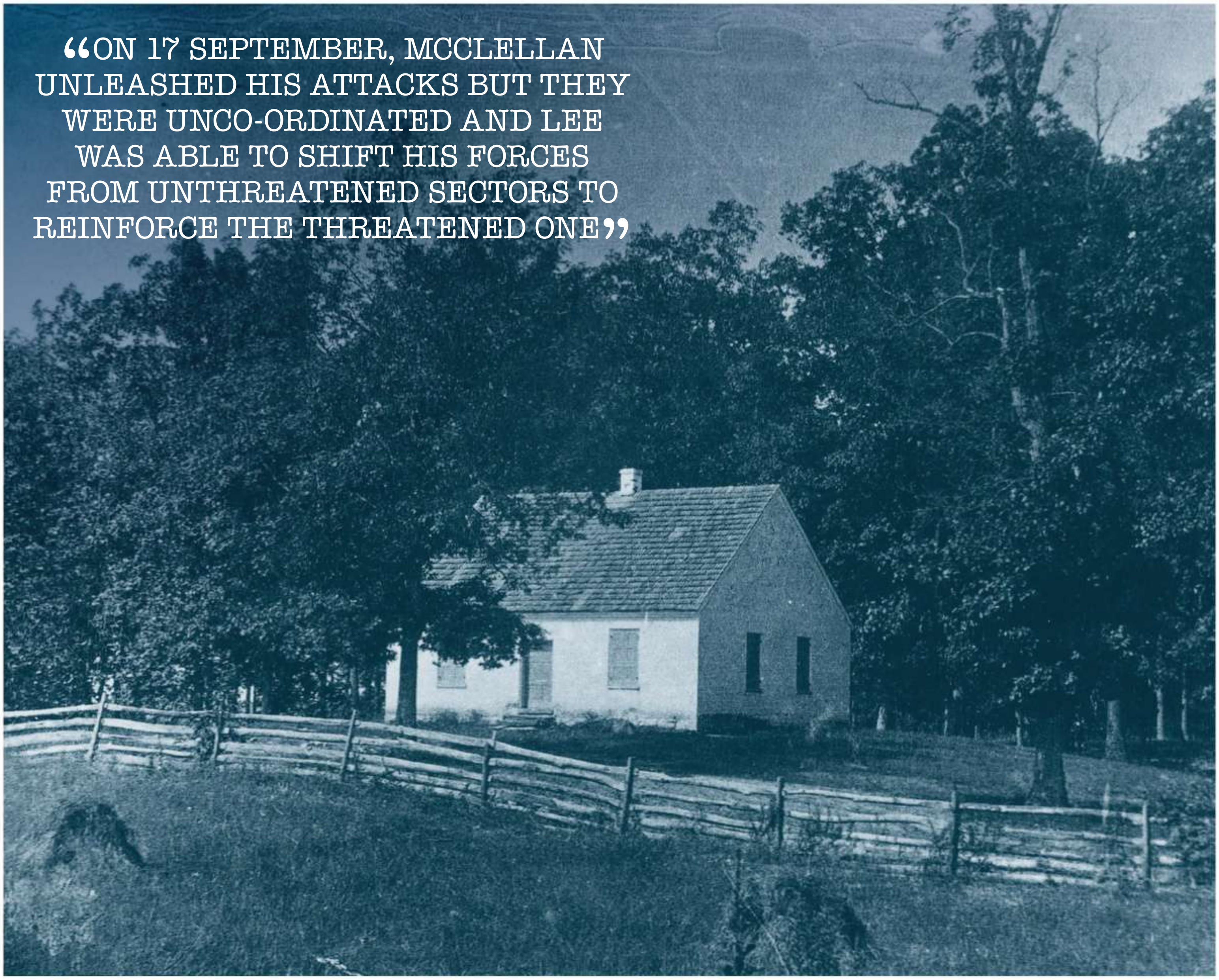
The families of the United States of America, torn apart by Civil War, suffered heavy blows as long casualty lists emerged each month of the year 1862, but none was as long as that of 17 September 1862. The dead and wounded in the fields around the town of Sharpsburg, Maryland, reached a total 26,193 men.

The battle marked the end of General Robert E. Lee's attempt to carry the war into Maryland, well known as a state where many had sympathy with the Rebels. A victory here might even have convinced foreign powers such as Britain and France to grant official recognition to the Confederate government.

Lee's plans were undone by the carelessness of a staff officer who dropped an order intended for one of the divisions of Stonewall Jackson corps in a field. Later some Federal soldiers found the envelope containing the order and it passed up the chain of command rapidly until it was in the hands of General George McClellan. McClellan planned to mass his Army of the Potomac near Antietam Creek and attack part of Lee's army at the town of Sharpsburg.

McClellan took too long planning his attack and allowed Lee to gather reinforcements at Antietam. On 17 September, McClellan unleashed his attacks but they were unco-ordinated and Lee was able to shift his forces from unthreatened sectors to reinforce the threatened one. The Federal soldiers pressed home their attacks and at about 1 p.m. had opened a gap in the centre of the Rebel line. The soldiers who had made the gap had been too heavily engaged to continue and reinforcements were needed. Although two corps were available, inexplicably neither was used. Instead, the remainder of the Federal effort of the day was spent on a diversionary attack across Antietam Creek.

"ON 17 SEPTEMBER, MCCLELLAN UNLEASHED HIS ATTACKS BUT THEY WERE UNCO-ORDINATED AND LEE WAS ABLE TO SHIFT HIS FORCES FROM UNTHREATENED SECTORS TO REINFORCE THE THREATENED ONE"



The Dunker Church was a key landmark on the Rebel left during the battle of Antietam on 17 September 1862, defended by the men of Stonewall Jackson's corps.

Lee triumphs at old battlefield

General Robert E. Lee led his Rebel Army of Northern Virginia to victory over the Federal Army of Virginia on the old battlefield of Bull Run on 29–30 August 1862. He is now poised to advance north and draw the remaining Federal forces away from Richmond.

The Army of Virginia, numbering 50,000 soldiers, was formed from the separate Federal commands that had faced "Stonewall" Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley in the spring, and given to a general fresh from victories in the west, General John Pope. Lee confronted the problem of how to deal with Pope at the same time as stopping General George B. McClellan's 90,000 soldiers at Harrison's Landing from advancing on Richmond. Once President Lincoln ordered McClellan to join forces with Pope, Lee had his chance and shifted his army northwestwards to attack Pope before McClellan could get there.

> “POPE, OUTNUMBERED BY LEE‘S UNITED ARMY, TOOK A GAMBLE OF HIS OWN, BELIEVING HE COULD DEFEAT JACKSON BEFORE THE REST OF LEE’S ARMY COULD ARRIVE TO HELP”

By 25 August Lee had concentrated his forces against Pope, although they were still widely separated. Pope, outnumbered by Lee's united army, took a gamble of his own, believing he could defeat Jackson before the rest of Lee's army could arrive to provide help.

Pope attacked Jackson near the Bull Run battlefield of the year before, but unwisely sent his divisions in as soon as they arrived on the battlefield, instead of waiting for them to deliver the kind of co-ordinated blow that would probably have driven Jackson out of his position.

Pope tried again on the second day of battle, using troops from his left flank to attack Jackson's position. What he did not realize was that the forces facing his left consisted of a larger corps than Jackson's, that of General James Longstreet. Timing his blow to perfection, Longstreet swept away Pope's left wing, delivering a crushing blow that threw Pope's army into retreat.

Officers and their wives of the 19th Georgia Infantry. The regiment fought in the railroad cut that bore the brunt of the Federal assaults on the first day of the Second Battle of Bull Run.

OBITUARY

Frederick Townsend Ward (1831–1862)

The mortal wounding of Frederick Townsend Ward, founder and commander of China's Ever-Victorious Army, occurred while he was attacking the city of Tz'u-chi on 21 September 1862. Ward may have been shot on the orders of a Chinese general.

Ward was born in Salem, Massachusetts, and was sent to sea as the second mate on a clipper ship at the age of 16. He made several trips to China, where in 1860 he was serving on a gunboat engaged in fighting piracy. His activities brought him into contact with the wealthy business leaders of Shanghai, who were concerned at the effect a long-drawn-out civil war between the Imperial government and the Taiping Rebels was having on their affairs. He was asked to organize a mercenary army on their behalf, made up of Westerners in China.

Ward's small force fought along side Chinese imperial forces with mixed success. He was badly wounded in one engagement in the summer of 1860, and while he was recuperating developed the idea of forming a Chinese military force trained in Western-style warfare. He led the Ever-Victorious Army into battle in January 1862. The force's name proved to be no hyperbole, with Ward becoming famous and a Chinese citizen. Ward also developed a riverine auxiliary force, enabling the Ever-Victorious Army to use the rivers effectively in its campaigns against the Taiping, making up for the poor-quality roads in China.

Ward died of his wounds on 22 September 1862.

Slaughter before the stone wall

A view across the Rappahannock toward the Rebel positions, with Fredericksburg in the middle distance, and Marye's Heights just beyond, in front of which so many Federal soldiers fell.

The dominance of the Rebel Army of Northern Virginia continued as the Federal army suffered a heavy defeat at the Battle of Fredericksburg, in Virginia, on 13 December 1862. In perhaps the most bitter loss of them all so far, Federal soldiers were sent on a suicidal assault against a prepared enemy on higher ground.

The battle was part of a campaign launched by the new commander of the Army of the Potomac, General Ambrose Burnside. Burnside had taken on the job reluctantly, not considering himself suited to the responsibility. However, once in charge he made some significant changes to the army's organization and displayed great energy in leading it into battle.

The key to Burnside's plan was to cross the Rapahannock river rapidly at Fredericksburg, but after his army reached the opposite bank, it was delayed for two weeks waiting for the pontoons needed to build a bridge. This gave the time for General Robert E. Lee to rush his army to the heights overlooking Fredericksburg.

In spite of this initial failure, Burnside was still determined to attack. His plan now called for the main effort to take place against the Rebel right, south of Fredericksburg. The attack from the town was intended to prevent Lee from repositioning troops. In the end, the whole plan – not a good one, in any case – was bungled by Burnside's subordinates, who mismanaged both attacks. The troops crossing the field between the town and the heights suffered particularly heavily, as they were forced to march across open ground while under fire the whole time. Federal casualties amounted to 12,653, the Rebels only 5,309.

The Battle of Perryville

The largest battle of the war in Kentucky took place on 8 October 1862 and ended in a Rebel victory. Yet, owing to the curious events of the day, the Rebel commander preferred to retreat rather than risk a heavy defeat.

In August 1862, in conjunction with General Lee's coming invasion of Maryland, two Rebel forces – those in East Tennessee, some 19,000 men, and the Confederate Army of Tennessee, of just over 25,000 – began marching independently towards Kentucky. The East Tennessee force, commanded by General Edmund Kirby Smith, moved rapidly so that at the beginning of September they were at the state capital, Frankfort, and began preparations to inaugurate a Confederate governor. Smith's army was dispersed to defend the state. On 4 October, as the inauguration was under way, a small Federal force attacked. General Don Carlos Buell and the 60,000-strong Army of the Ohio had returned from central Tennessee to drive the Rebels out of Kentucky.

General Braxton Bragg, the Army of Tennessee's commander and overall senior officer in Kentucky, pulled back in the face of Federal superior numbers. As the two armies manoeuvred for favourable positions, the bulk of Buell's troops bumped into just under half of Bragg's men at Perryville. The fighting began over access to water, on the night of 7 October. The next day, the Rebels attacked the left of the Federal position, utterly unaware that almost twice as many soldiers lay within 2½ miles (4 km) – but neither did Buell.

The Battle of Perryville was notorious for the "acoustic shadow" that prevented its sounds carrying across to the main Federal headquarters. The Federal forces, a third of whom were new recruits, suffered heavily from the Rebel attacks and gave ground. Bragg at first planned to attack them next day, then realized how the odds were stacked against him, and began retreating back to Tennessee.

> “THE FIGHTING BEGAN OVER ACCESS TO WATER, ON THE NIGHT OF 7 OCTOBER”

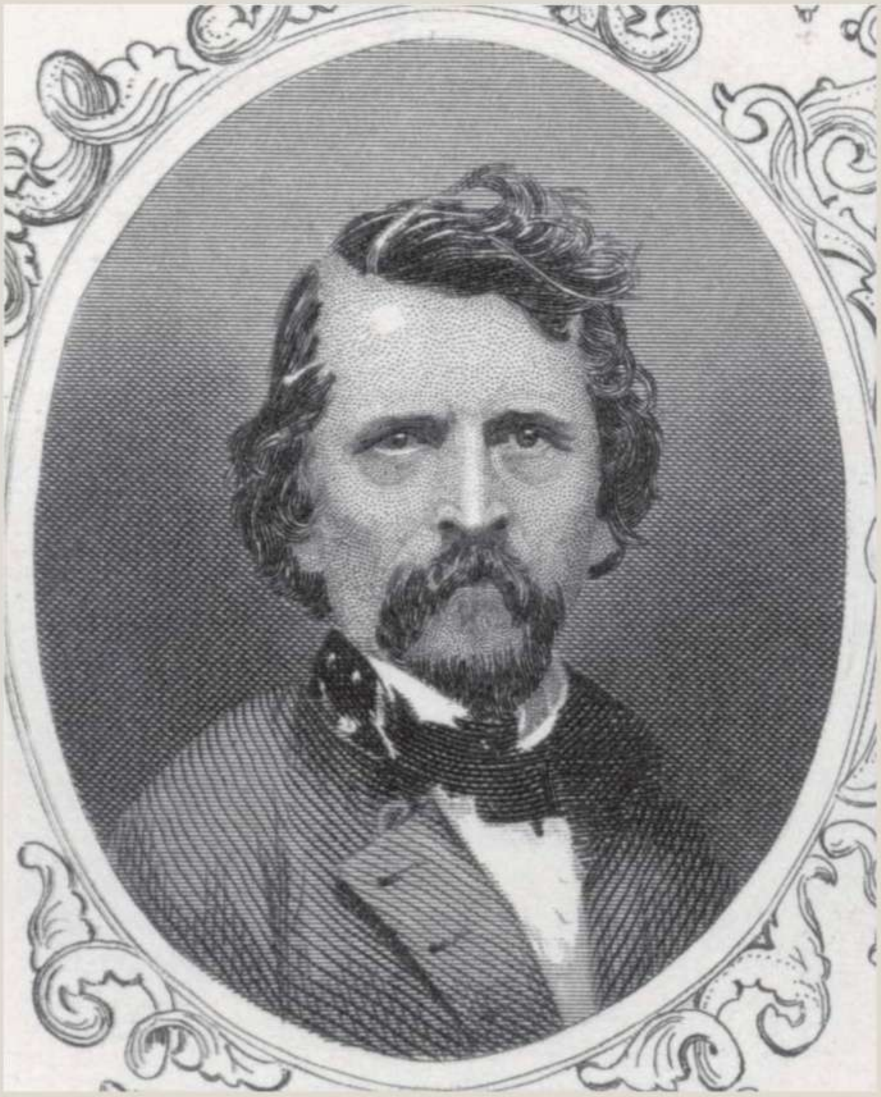
The rolling terrain around the Perryville battlefield created acoustic conditions that prevented a sizeable portion of the Federal army from realizing that a major battle was being fought.

WESTERN UNION VICTORIES

- On 19 September 1862, a battle was fought at Iuka, Mississippi, between General Sterling Price and General William S. Rosecrans. Price was trying to prevent Federal troops in northern Mississippi from being withdrawn to reinforce Kentucky. However, General Grant sent Rosecrans to find Price first and defeat him. Price instead attacked Rosecrans, but the attack was beaten off.

- After defeat at Iuka, Price joined General Earl Van Dorn for an attack on Corinth, Mississippi, a former Rebel base that had been captured by the Union the previous spring. In a two-day fight on hot Indian summer days, 3–4 October 1862, the attacking Rebels were badly defeated by General Rosecrans.

- Across the Mississippi, an 11,000-strong Rebel army commanded by General Thomas Hindman attempted to drive the main Federal army out of Arkansas. At the battle of Prairie Grove on 8 December 1862, both sides fought to a standstill, but Hindman withdrew after nightfall.



General Earl Van Dorn was an aggressive commander, shot dead, not on the battlefield, but on the streets of a Tennessee town by an aggrieved husband.

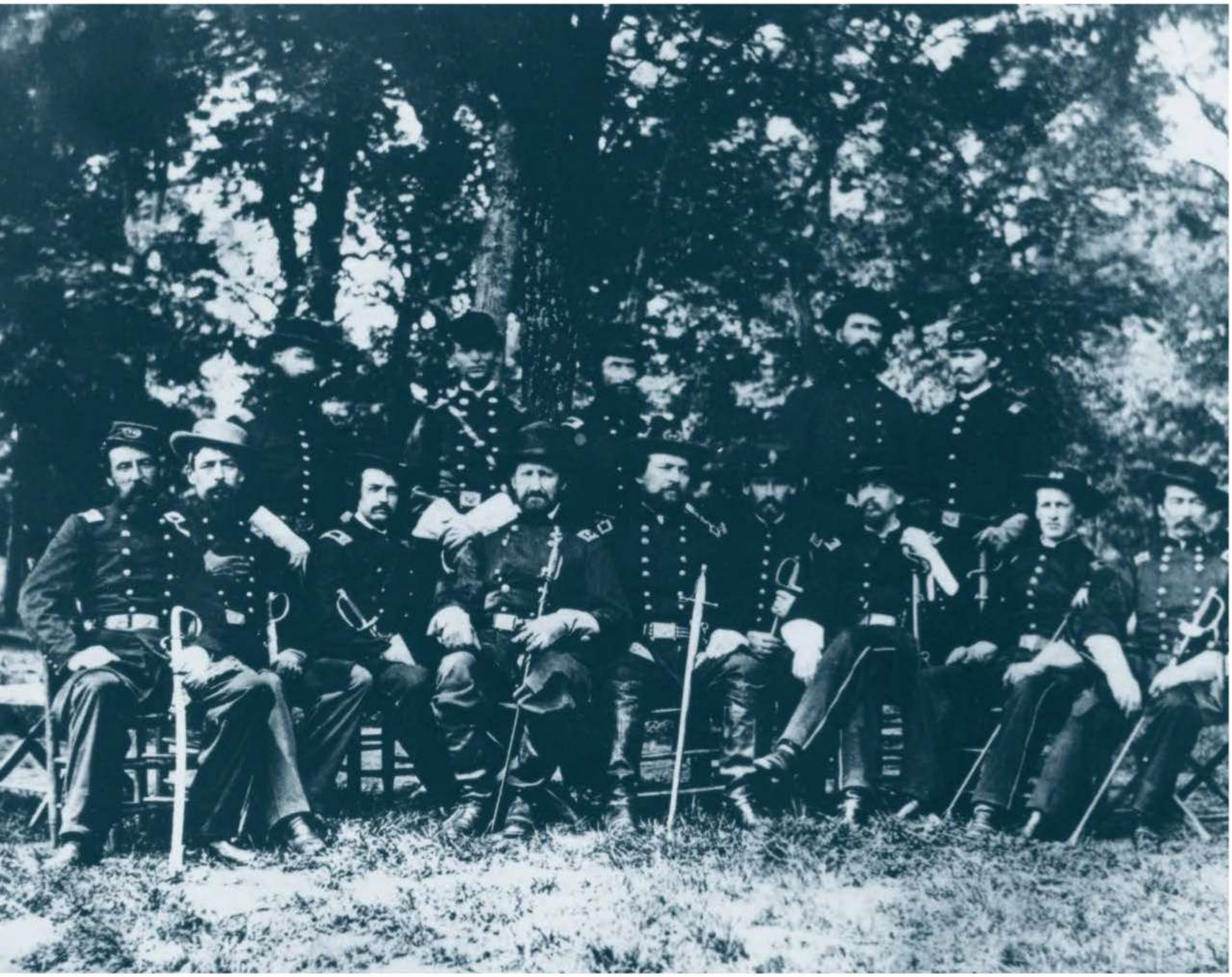
A bloody new year

Federal and Rebel armies clashed at the Battle of Stones River over the New Year of 1863 in central Tennessee, when General Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee attempted to defeat a larger Federal force commanded by General William S. Rosecrans near the town of Murfreesboro.

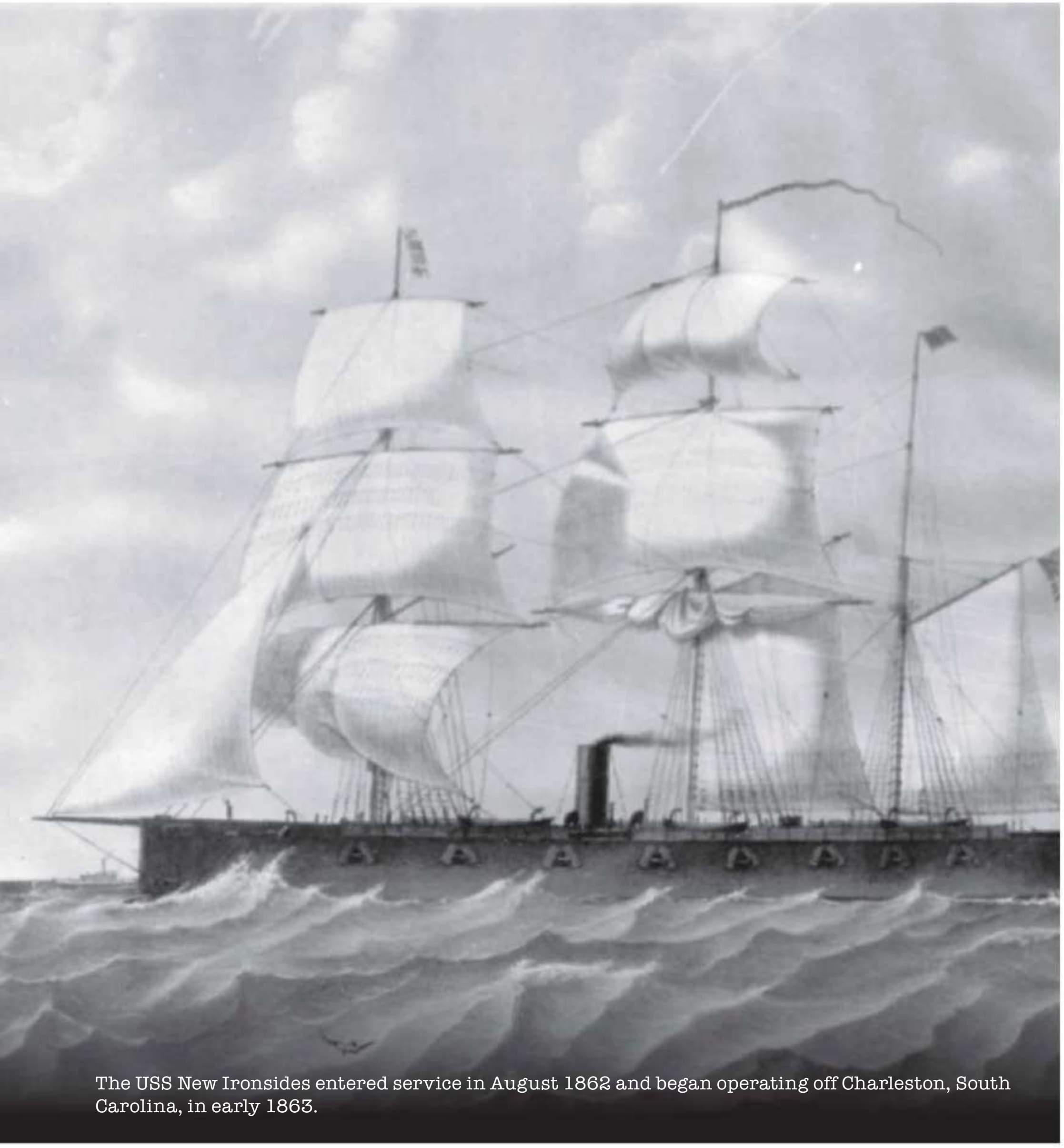
Both armies camped near one another on 30 December 1862 and adopted the same plan, but Bragg's men attacked first on the morning of 31 December, thus taking the initiative from Rosecrans. As at Shiloh, the Rebels made rapid gains until they encountered a division ready to stand and fight. General Philip Sheridan's unit stood firm, repelling major assaults from three sides while occupying a cedar forest that became known as the Slaughter Pen. By the end of the day on 31 December, Bragg's attack had driven the Federal army into a tight u-shape.

On New Year's Day, both armies rested, tending their wounded. The battle resumed on 2 January, when Bragg sent one of his corps to attack a division that Rosecrans had placed on some high ground overlooking his left wing. The attack was successful until the Rebels came within range of a battery of 45 guns, lined up hub to hub, positioned to protect the troops on the heights. The guns fired steadily, ripping huge gaps in the Rebel lines and forcing them to retreat.

General Bragg originally believed he had actually won a victory, but ordered the withdrawal of his army on 3 January when it seemed that Rosecrans was steadily receiving reinforcements.



General William S. Rosecrans (seated centre, holding sword) with the staff of the Federal Army of the Cumberland. Rosecrans' forces were attacked at Stones River, but fought off the Rebel army under General Braxton Bragg.



The USS New Ironsides entered service in August 1862 and began operating off Charleston, South Carolina, in early 1863.

Bombardment of Charleston

An attempt to gain control of Charleston harbor through a bombardment by Federal ironclads failed on 7 April 1863. Rear Admiral Samuel Du Pont had a powerful fleet at his disposal, consisting of the large USS New Ironsides, an armoured frigate, seven monitors and the USS Keokuk, an ugly armoured-casemate ship.

The Federal squadron sailed up the main ship channel, which carried them between Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumter. The lead monitor, the USS Weehawken, pushed a raft that would be used to sweep aside any torpedo mines, but as she neared the bombardment position, lookouts spotted a very dangerous obstacle, consisting of nets and cables studded with torpedo mines. The Federal squadron halted and the Rebel batteries opened fire.

The guns blazed away for about an hour and the New Ironsides and the Keokuk were heavily battered, while the monitors got off more lightly. The Keokuk had to pull out of the action after firing only three shots, so badly damaged that she sank the next day. After about an hour, the rest of the Federal squadron withdrew.

Action at Grand Gulf

Federal Mississippi gunboats failed to destroy the Rebel batteries at Grand Gulf, Mississippi, after a five-hour bombardment on 27 April 1863, the operation being part of General Ulysses Grant's campaign to capture Vicksburg.

Grant had abandoned any attempt to capture Vicksburg from his base of operations to the north of the city, around Memphis and Corinth. Instead, he took most of his army, crossed to the western bank of the Mississippi, and made his way below Vicksburg to a town opposite Grand Gulf, named Hard Times. The gunboats, commanded by Admiral David Dixon Porter, ran past the guns of Vicksburg by night, to rendezvous with Grant's army. Initially, Grant hoped to cross the river at Grand Gulf, even though the Rebels had placed strong batteries on hills overlooking the town.

Porter's gunboats divided into two groups, three attacking the strong position to the north of the town and four the southern battery. Both batteries had been constructed on high ground, but only the northern battery was well equipped with heavy guns. The southern battery was successfully subdued by the four gunboats, which then joined the other three vessels in their attack. But even after five hours, the Federal gunboats had no apparent effect on the Rebel battery and had themselves been damaged.

> “PORTER'S GUNBOATS DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS, THREE ATTACKING THE STRONG POSITION TO THE NORTH OF THE TOWN AND FOUR THE SOUTHERN BATTERY. BOTH BATTERIES HAD BEEN CONSTRUCTED ON HIGH GROUND, BUT ONLY THE NORTHERN BATTERY WAS WELL EQUIPPED WITH HEAVY GUNS”

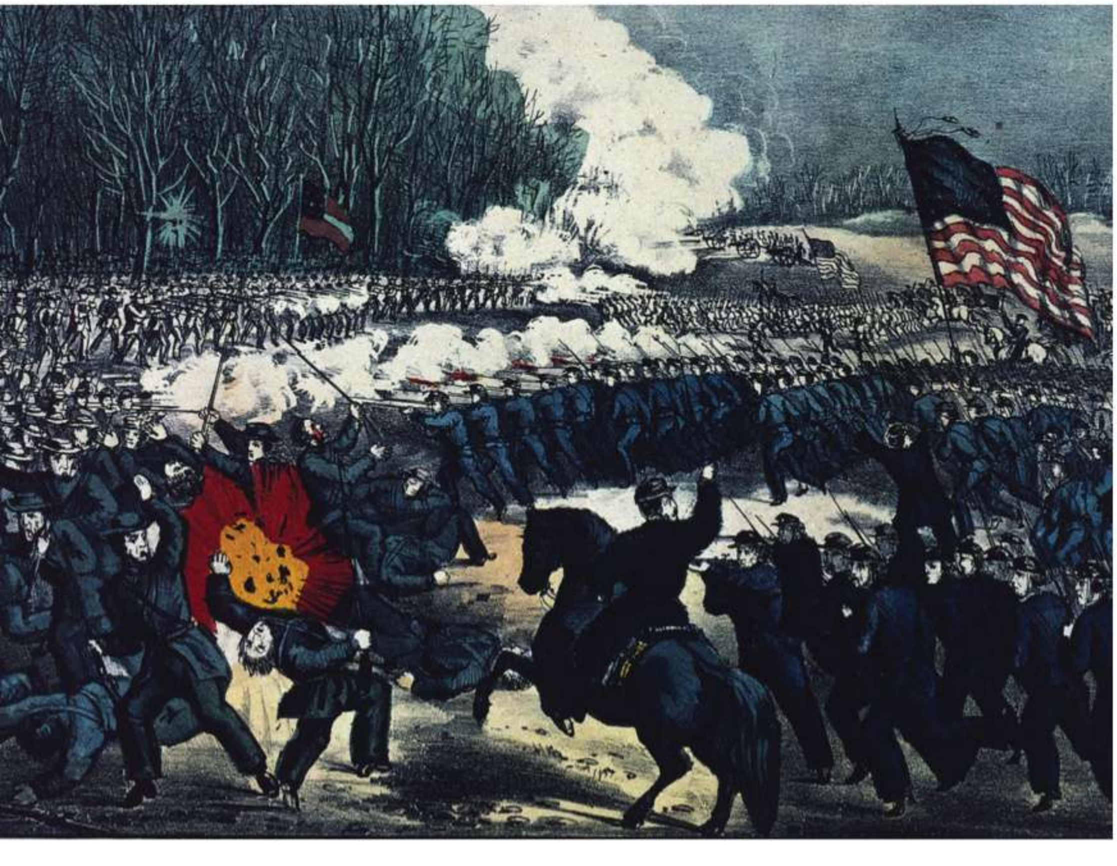
Outnumbered Lee triumphs, loses Stonewall

A heavily outnumbered Rebel army has performed a daring manoeuvre to achieve a crushing victory at Chancellorsville in northern Virginia. The Federal commander, General Joseph Hooker, had marched and skirmished his way to a strong position on 2 May 1863.

At this point, the Rebel army, numbering 60,000 soldiers and commanded by General Robert E. Lee, was in danger of being trapped on two sides by the Federal forces. Lee, however, sent General Stonewall Jackson, with the greater portion of his army, around the Federal right flank, before attacking the totally unprepared Union XI Corps. Now it was the Federal army that was apparently trapped. However, a detached Federal force in front of Fredericksburg launched an attack as the troops around Chancellorsville withdrew from the trap. The Rebels were not strong enough to prevent the Federal withdrawal and deal with the threat to their own right flank. The Rebel army now divided itself once again and halted the Federal advance from Fredericksburg.

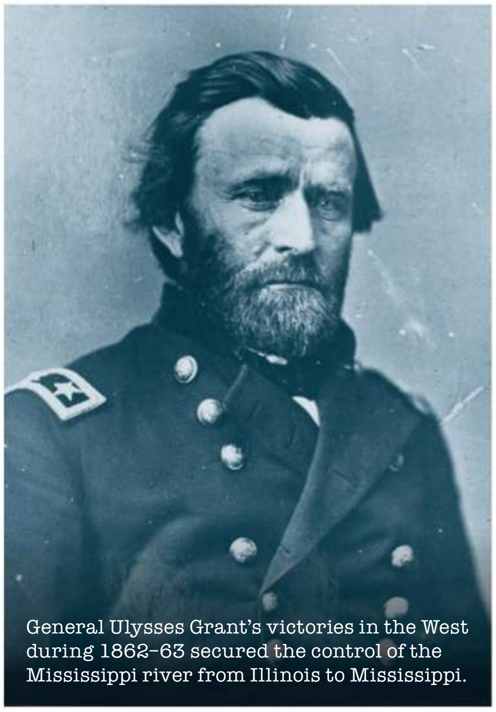
Both sides' losses totalled almost 30,000 men in the three days of fighting. Among the wounded was Jackson, who died of pneumonia on 10 May.

> “BOTH SIDES SUFFERED LOSSES OF OVER 10,000 MEN IN THE THREE DAYS OF FIGHTING. AMONG THE WOUNDED WAS JACKSON, WHO DIED OF PNEUMONIA ON 10 MAY”



An artistic depiction of the battle of Chancellorsville shows Rebel troops emerging from woods in an attack on a Federal line.

Grant finds the back door to Vicksburg



General Ulysses Grant's victories in the West during 1862–63 secured the control of the Mississippi river from Illinois to Mississippi.

On 18 May 1863, a Federal army put under siege the last Rebel-held strongpoint along the Mississippi river. General Ulysses S. Grant, after a masterful spring campaign following a difficult winter, is poised to capture his second Rebel army of the war.

After a couple of false starts in the winter, Grant adopted the most risky of options when he marched his army down the western bank of the Mississippi. Federal gunboats and supply vessels, operating under the cover of darkness, also sailed past the Vicksburg defences on the nights of 16 and 22 April 1863. With the help of these vessels, Grant crossed the Mississippi on 30 April at Bruinsburg.

Now able to approach Vicksburg from the south, Grant advanced quickly east to Jackson, which he captured on 14 May after a battle near the town with Rebel defenders. He then turned west and defeated a second Rebel army in battles at Champion's Hill and the Big Black River Bridge on 16 and 17 May. The Rebel army retired behind the Vicksburg defences, hoping that a relief force would raise the siege.

Battle of Brandy Station

Federal cavalry attacked their Rebel counterparts near Brandy Station, Virginia, on 9 June 1863, and achieved an early success before being driven back across the Rappahannock river. The day before the battle, the Rebel cavalry commander, General J.E.B. Stuart, presented his men in review before General Robert E. Lee. Stuart was so focused on this proud event that he failed to detect the movement of the Federal cavalry towards Culpeper Court House, as ordered by General Joseph Hooker in an attempt to regain some kind of initiative over the Rebels who had beaten his army a month ago at Chancellorsville. The battle focused on control of Fleetwood Hill, where sabres flashed as cavalry launched massed charges against their counterparts. After a 12-hour battle, the Federal forces were unable to gain control of Fleetwood Hill and retired.

> “STUART WAS SO FOCUSED ON THIS PROUD EVENT THAT HE FAILED TO DETECT THE MOVEMENT OF THE FEDERAL CAVALRY TOWARDS CULPEPER COURT HOUSE”

A Federal cavalryman crosses the Hazel river near Brandy Station. The Federal cavalry surprised the Rebels, for the first time during the war in the Eastern theatre.

Puebla falls to French

The French invasion of Mexico resumed in the spring of 1863 as a much-reinforced army advanced inland to lay siege to Puebla on 16 March. Instead of surrounding the city, the French targeted specific parts of the defences in order to secure a breach which they could subsequently use to force the surrender of the rest of the town. However, the Mexicans defended doggedly, using churches and monasteries as strongpoints. A Mexican attempt to relieve the siege on 5 May failed, and the relief force itself was surprised in its camp at night shortly after by a French attack. On 17 May Puebla at last fell to the French. The way to Mexico City was now open.

> “INSTEAD OF SURROUNDING THE CITY, THE FRENCH TARGETED SPECIFIC PARTS OF THE DEFENCES IN ORDER TO SECURE A BREACH”

COPPERHEADS

The citizens of Federal states were by no means united on the need to defeat the secessionist southern ones. A political faction, called Copperheads by Federal sympathizers, after a venomous North American snake, was active in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois – states where many had family ties with the south. Clement Vallandigham was the most prominent Copperhead.

In May 1863 he spoke against the war, falling foul of a military order issued by the local commander, General Ambrose Burnside, against “declaring sympathies for the enemy”. Vallandigham was tried by a military court, and sentenced to prison, although eventually President Lincoln commuted his sentence to exile in the Confederacy.

The French Foreign Legion

On 30 April 1863, the 3rd Company, 1st Battalion, of the French Foreign Legion left its camp at Chiquihuite, near Vera Cruz, to accompany a convoy coming up from the port of Vera Cruz to the French army laying siege to Puebla. The convoy not only included rations and equipment for conducting the siege, but also a substantial amount of gold, some 3 million francs' worth.

Foreign Legion officers from the 1st Regiment, photographed in North Africa, circa 1900. Most officers were French, but the enlisted men were supposed to be foreign, although many French signed up claiming citizenship of a French-speaking country.

The coastal region of Mexico around Vera Cruz suffered badly from yellow fever and many legionnaires had gone down with the disease. The result was that only 62 men out of the company of 120 were fit for service, and they were joined by three officers who volunteered for duty with the company from battalion headquarters. The commander was Captain Danjou, who had lost his left hand during the Crimean War and had had it replaced with a wooden one.

Danjou assembled his men at 11 p.m. on 29 April and led them out after midnight. At 7 a.m. they stopped to brew coffee and eat breakfast but before they could eat they discovered that a large body of Mexican cavalry was approaching them. Estimating their number at around 800 strong, Captain Danjou realized he could not outrun them, nor could he defeat them in the open, so he ordered his men back up the road to a farm known as the Hacienda Camarone. The cavalry caught up with them just a few hundred yards short of the building and Danjou ordered the forming of a square, the traditional infantry defence against cavalry. The square successfully fended off a Mexican cavalry charge, but the horsemen continued to ride around the formation. With bayonets fixed, the legionnaires charged toward the buildings and most made it to the hacienda, escaping the lances of the Mexicans.

"THE LEGION'S HISTORY IS ALSO ENTWINED WITH FRANCE'S MILITARY HISTORY SINCE ITS FOUNDATION, INCLUDING SOME OF THE MOMENTS OF GREATEST SACRIFICE AND DEFEAT AS WELL AS HEROIC DEFENCE"

Danjou and his men fought the whole day from the hacienda in an impossible position. The Mexicans already outnumbered them ten-to-one at the outset of the battle, but were then joined by 1,200 infantry. Although many of the Mexican soldiers had better rifles than the French, the French marksmanship was far superior. Numbers, however, gradually told.

Danjou himself was hit in the chest around 11 a.m. He realized that so long as the Mexicans were attacking his men they could not go after the convoy so, before he died, he insisted that his men swear an oath never to surrender.

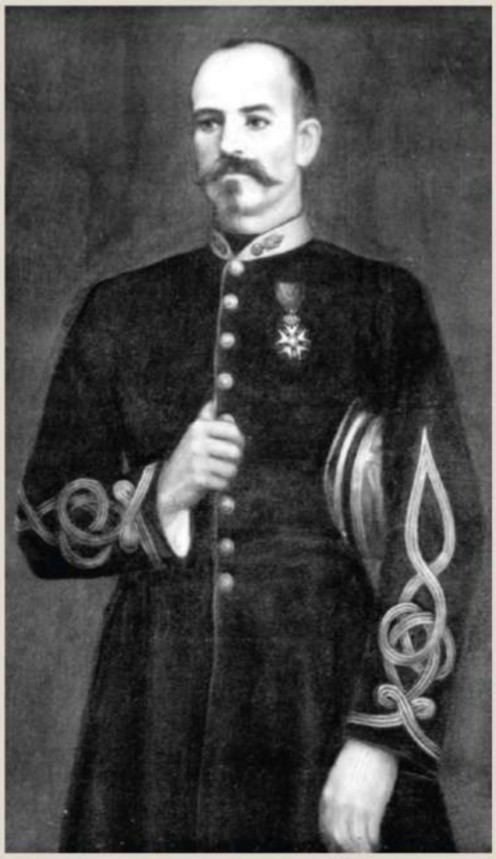
The survivors of Danjou almost kept the oath. Their resistance continued until a little after 6 p.m. when there were only six left alive and fighting. Three of these were killed in the final assault, leaving three to surrender, provided they were allowed to keep their weapons. The Mexicans granted the request. "These are not soldiers, but devils," commented the Mexican commander, Colonel Francisco de Paula Milan. Around 300 Mexicans had been killed and many more were wounded in the fighting.

The founding of the Legion

The French Foreign Legion, founded in 1831, still marks Camerone Day each year on 30 April. Captain Danjou's wooden hand is kept like a sacred relic, having been eventually recovered from Mexico. For the Legion, Camerone is the perfect expression of their dedication to fighting.

The Legion was founded as a unit of foreign mercenaries intended for service in the conquest of Algeria. Predominantly officered by Frenchmen, the rank and file are been drawn from numerous countries, although many French join while claiming nationality of a French-speaking country such as Belgium or Switzerland.

For much of its career it has been associated with the French empire, and in particular with North Africa. In the English-speaking world, the image of the Legion remains one of a blue-coated or khaki-clad, hard-bitten



Captain Jean Danjou's defence of the Hacienda Camarone against Mexican nationalists is commemorated each year by the Legion.

loner striding across Saharan sands in order to forget or escape some secret past. Some people might even now be surprised to learn the unit still exists, and still nurtures its peculiar esprit de corps of hard-fighting loyalty to a foreign country unto death.

However, the Foreign Legion remains an important element of the French military. In recent decades it has acted as a rapid reaction force deployed in defence of France's national interests, particularly in Africa. In 1978 it parachuted out of relative obscurity into Kolwezi to rescue Europeans in this Zairean province threatened by anti-government Rebels. It has also participated in peacekeeping in Kosovo, in the liberation of Kuwait in 1990-91, and in anti-terrorist operations in Djibouti and Afghanistan.

The Legion's history is also entwined with France's military history since its foundation, including some of the moments of greatest sacrifice and defeat, as well as heroic defence. Foreign legionnaires, in spite of their charter barring them from service in France, fought in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, in battles around Orleans. During the First World War, the Legion fought at Verdun and elsewhere. Included among those who served with the Legion in this war was the American poet Alan Seeger, whose poem "Rendezvous with Death" proved eerily prophetic.

The Second World War was a mixture of highs and lows for the Legion. The creation of the Vichy French regime led to a quandary. Legally, it was the legitimate government of France, although General Charles de Gaulle's Free French movement offered a risky alternative for those opposed to German aggression. As some of the Legion's rank and file included Germans who had fled Hitler, it is not surprising that the Legion provided an important component of de Gaulle's forces. Vichy legionnaires and Free French legionnaires fought one another in Syria in 1941, and the defence of Bir Hakeim against the Germans in North Africa by the 13th Demi-Brigade has been embraced by the Legion as another moment of glory in their history.

After 1945, the Legion's history became somewhat chequered. They experienced a bitter defeat at Dien Bien Phu in Indochina in 1954, and also took part in the brutal Algerian Independence War. After de Gaulle chose to grant independence to Algeria in 1961, some members of the Foreign Legion joined the Generals' Putsch that attempted to overthrow de Gaulle's government.

The Legion's headquarters were based in Algeria, but, following the country's independence, the Legion was forced to move to southern France and Corsica.

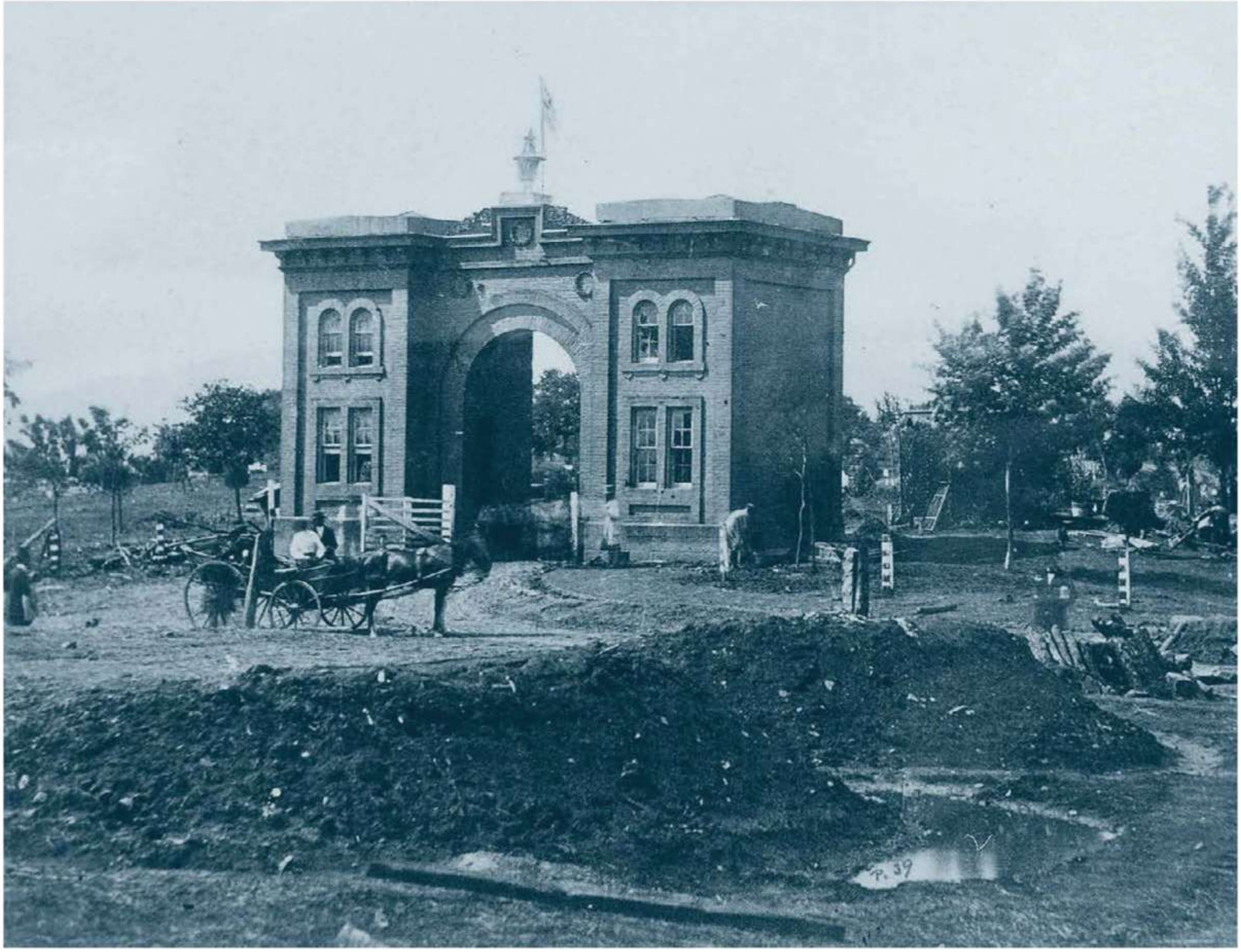
French Foreign Legion soldiers spring across the Libyan desert during the battle of Bir Hakeim in 1942. Like the nation itself, the Legion divided between the Free French and the Vichy French.

The bloodiest battle in American history

The little Pennsylvania town of Gettysburg was the setting of the first major defeat of Rebel General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. The battle arose out of a Rebel advance on the town as one of Lee's divisions marched to Gettysburg on 1 July 1863. There they encountered Federal forces, initially only cavalry. However, both sides moved reinforcements in the direction of the firing, and soon a major battle developed. At nightfall on 1 July, the Federal forces had been pushed out of their initial positions to the west of the town, and now occupied a fishhook-shaped line of hills to the south.

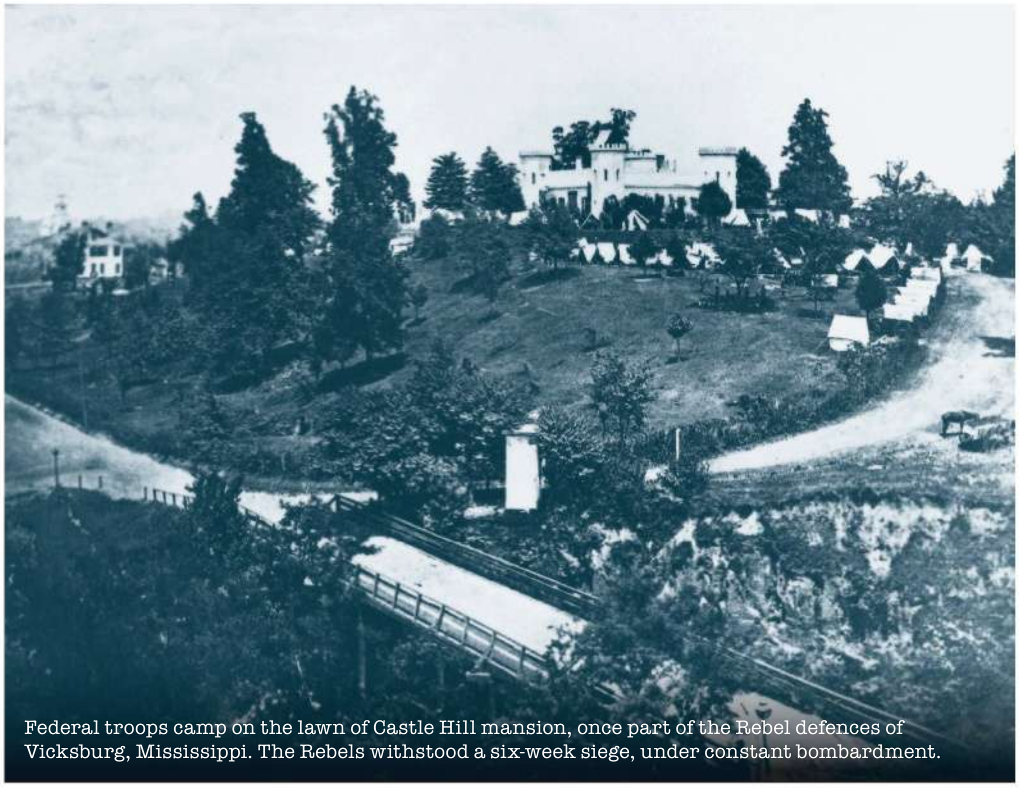
Lee planned a double envelopment, first attacking the far south of the Federal line, anchored on the hills of Little Round Top and Big Round Top. A second assault took place later in the day against the northern end of the Federal line, at Cemetery and Culp's hills. General George Meade, the Federal commander of the Army of the Potomac, was happy with his strong defensive line and focused his efforts on shifting reinforcements to counter the Rebel attacks. The fighting on the Round Tops was crucial to the battle, for if the Rebels had captured Little Round Top, the Federal position could not have been held. However, a valiant defence masterminded by the 20th Maine Regiment's commander, Colonel Joshua Chamberlain, secured the feature for the Federal.

The Rebels returned to the attack on 3 July, this time with a massive frontal assault against the centre of the Federal lines at Cemetery Hill. Pickett's charge ended in a costly failure, although the leading elements of his attack penetrated the Federal line. After three days of losses, Lee retreated. His invasion to the north had been intended to carry the war into Federal states and secure a victory that might have disheartened Northerners enough for them to agree to a peace treaty. However, the invasion ended in a battle that cost 51,000 American casualties.



The gates of Cemetery Hill after the battle of Gettysburg in July 1863. The hill was a crucial part of the Federal line, and could have been captured by the Rebels on the first day of the battle had they attacked.

Grant conquers Vicksburg



Federal troops camp on the lawn of Castle Hill mansion, once part of the Rebel defences of Vicksburg, Mississippi. The Rebels withstood a six-week siege, under constant bombardment.

On 4 July 1863, a three-month siege ended with the surrender of Vicksburg, Mississippi, the "Gibraltar of the West", to a Federal army commanded by Major General Ulysses S. Grant.

During the siege, Grant's army made two assaults on the Rebel lines, on 19 and 22 May, but both were repulsed with heavy losses. The earthwork fortifications around Vicksburg were very strong and it was not surprising that Grant's assaults failed. However, Grant said that "The troops believed they could carry the works in their front, and would not work so patiently in the trenches if they had not been allowed to try."

Grant's army began its lengthy siege operations. Their main effort initially went on an underground mine detonated on 25 June. Grant's soldiers stormed the resulting crater, but the Rebel defenders fought off the assault in ferocious hand-to-hand fighting.

The failure of this attack did nothing to relieve the Rebel garrison or the people of Vicksburg. The trenches and city were subject to constant bombardment, so many of the population hid in caves that were a geological feature of the area and offered more protection from shellfire than houses. Food was in short supply, people ate rats and some soldiers were near starvation.

With signs of an impending major assault, the commander of the Rebel garrison, General John C. Pemberton, met with Grant on 3 July and surrendered the next day.

IN BRIEF

Federal troops failed in an attempt to capture Morris Island, part of operations against the Rebel city of Charleston, in July 1863. A force commanded by Major General Quincy Gillmore twice assaulted Fort Wagner on 11 and 18 July, the latter attack led by the African-American 54th Massachusetts Infantry. General Gillmore concluded that a third assault would end in similar failure and resorted to a siege of Fort Wagner.

Morgan rides into prison

A 24-day cavalry raid into Indiana and Ohio led by Rebel General John Hunt Morgan ended on 26 July 1863 with the capture of his men and himself.

The raid was intended to disrupt the supply lines of the Union Army of the Cumberland, which a month earlier had begun advancing south-east from central Tennessee towards the city of Chattanooga, the main base for the Rebel Army of Tennessee. Morgan selected some 2,500 cavalrymen to carry out the raid and advanced into Kentucky at the beginning of July 1863.

After several fights with Federal troops in Kentucky, Morgan crossed the Ohio river into Indiana, his force having been reduced by about a third. His plan now was to travel up the Ohio river valley, crossing back to the south side somewhere in West Virginia.

The Federal response to Morgan was managed by General Ambrose Burnside, who called out local militia and deployed his troops to block the most likely routes Morgan would take heading south. Morgan succeeded in evading Burnside's forces for the most part, although he did need to fight a battle at Corydon, Indiana, against militia, whom he defeated on 9 July.

Morgan's force tried to cross the Ohio at Buffington Island on 19 July, but about half of his remaining force was captured, leaving some 700 men under Morgan's command. These, in turn, surrendered near Salineville, Ohio, seven days later.

General John Hunt Morgan's raid provided dramatic newspaper copy, but contributed little to the Rebel cause.

War in the wilderness

General Ulysses S. Grant was defeated by General Robert E. Lee in the Wilderness, near Chancellorsville, Virginia. This three-day battle on 5-7 May 1864 marked the opening of the summer campaigning season and the first confrontation between the two best generals to emerge during the war.

Grant marched out of winter quarters on 3 May across the Rapidan and toward the Wilderness, where the year before Lee had won a tremendous victory over the Army of the Potomac.

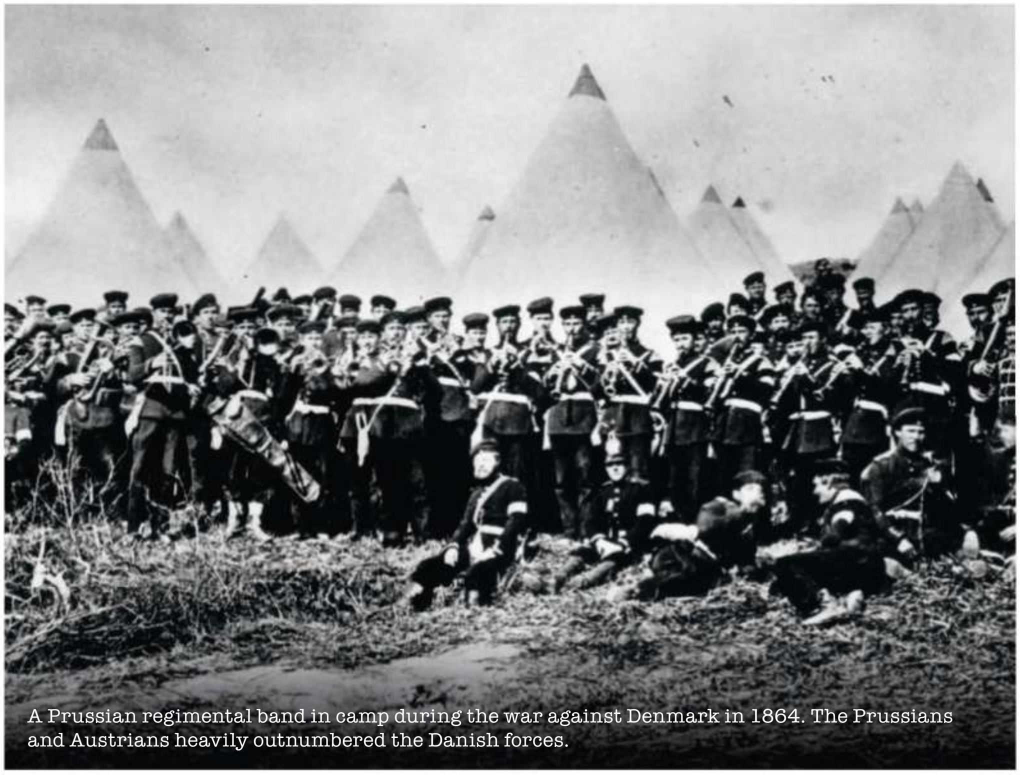
Meanwhile, Lee moved to intercept Grant in this tangled, uncultivated countryside, where Grant's superiority in artillery would count for less.

Lee had to go into battle with only two-thirds of his army, while Grant had only about half of his full forces. Although neither commander was ready for action, the armies clashed on 5 May. The battle started on the Federal left, where General Gouverneur Warren's V Corps faced General Richard Ewell's II Corps. They fought themselves to a standstill before reinforcements arrived. On the Federal right, General Winfield Scott Hancock's corps made considerable gains, pushing the Rebels back during the afternoon until nightfall ended the day's fighting.

The battle resumed on 6 May, with Hancock continuing to drive the Rebels back, but at midday, the rest of Lee's army arrived. General James Longstreet's I Corps counter-attacked and soon forced Hancock to withdraw, to the extent that all of his hard-gotten gains of the day before were given up. Rebel troops even infiltrated a gap in the centre of the Federal line along an unfinished railway cutting and seemed poised to divide the Federal army in two. However, by this time units on both sides were too mixed up, visibility was too obscured by smoke for any attacks to be effective and the battle came to an end.

> “THIS TWO-DAY BATTLE ON 5–6 MAY 1864 MARKED THE OPENING OF THE SUMMER CAMPAIGNING SEASON AND THE FIRST CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE TWO BEST GENERALS TO EMERGE DURING THE WAR”

General Ulysses S. Grant took the Federal army across the Rapidan river here at Germanna Ford to destroy General Robert E. Lee's Rebel army, to the relief of President Abraham Lincoln, who was tired of his generals concentrating their efforts on capturing Richmond.



A Prussian regimental band in camp during the war against Denmark in 1864. The Prussians and Austrians heavily outnumbered the Danish forces.

Prussia, Austria attack little Denmark

The Danes suffered a heavy defeat in the Battle of Dybbøl on 18 April 1864, at the hands of a Prussian army. The Prussians outnumbered the Danes by more than three to one, but could not achieve a decisive victory owing to the gallant charge of the Danish 8 Brigade, and the bombardment by the Danish ironclad Rolf Krake which prevented them from crossing Åls Sound.

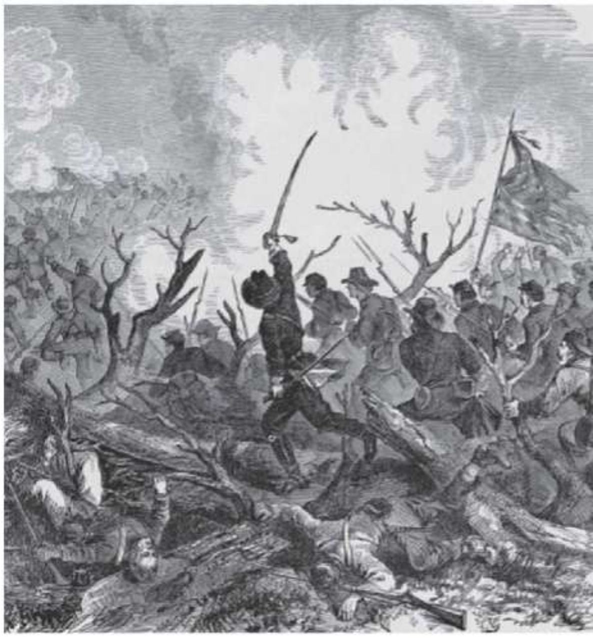
The war between Prussia, the dominant power in northern Germany, and its ally Austria, the nominal leader of the German Confederation, against Denmark, was over the fate of the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein. The duchies had been controlled by the kings of Denmark by treaty since the fifteenth century, but nationalist Germans had come to resent that the majority German population of Holstein, as well as the minority community in Schleswig, were under Danish rule. When the Danes formally proclaimed Schleswig to be an integral part of Denmark in November 1863, war became likely. German troops crossed the border into Holstein in December, and in February 1864, Austrian and Prussian soldiers crossed the Eider river into Schleswig.

The first major battle of the war was fought at Mysunde on 2 February, when the Danes beat off an attack. Their position had to be evacuated in the face of a superior enemy force, and a new defensive line was established around Dybbøl, just west of the Danish archipelago. The Danish position was besieged and after a lengthy bombardment lasting from mid-March until 18 April, the Prussians succeeded in driving them out to the island of Åls.

Red faces on Red River

A mishandled campaign along the Red River in Louisiana ended with Federal defeat and the apparent trapping of a riverine flotilla at Alexandria, Louisiana. When General Nathaniel P. Banks, commander of the Army of the Gulf, arrived in the town on 25 April 1864 he discovered the river level far too low for his gunboats to continue on down to the Mississippi.

Banks was ordered to advance up the Red river from southern Louisiana and capture Shreveport, Louisiana. He came within 35 miles (56 km) of the town when he was defeated in the Battle of Mansfield at Sabine Crossroads on 8 April 1864. The next day he fended off the Rebel pursuit of his retreating army at the Battle of Pleasant Hill and continued his withdrawal until he reached Alexandria.



Federal forces assault Rebel positions along the Cane river during the Red River Campaign.

IN BRIEF

The defeat of a 500-strong Maori army, at Te Ranga, New Zealand, on 21 June 1864, by British forces, was the last battle of the Waikato War. An eight-hour bombardment preceded the assault by 300 British troops but a 230-man Maori garrison had built bomb-proof shelters and drove the British off with heavy casualties. The Maoris, however, withdrew, and were followed by British patrols that located the main Maori force at Te Ranga.

Grant moves south

A ferocious battle raged around Spotsylvania Court House in May 1864 as Lee's forces defended an entrenched position against Federal attacks.

Three days of attacks at Spotsylvania Court House have ended with some 32,000 casualties to both armies. Union General Ulysses S. Grant has resumed his Army of the Potomac's march south after breaking off the action on 18 May 1864, shadowed by General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

After the Battle of the Wilderness, Grant abandoned the battlefield and was expected by both the Rebels and his own men to head back north of the Rapidan river, but he resumed the march in a south-easterly direction, to the surprise of his men.

Once Lee realized what was happening, he sent a force of troops to Spotsylvania, an intersection of three roads, to block the southward advance. Lee's men reached the junction first and began digging defensive positions.

After some preliminary skirmishing, the battle opened on 10 May. The Rebel position was shaped almost like an upside-down "U", and Grant attacked it at the apex of the 'Mule Shoe'. The assault was an innovative one conducted by Colonel Emory Upton who rushed the Rebel entrenchment with 12 regiments drawn up in four lines, without pausing to fire until the men were almost in the trenches themselves.

As the Rebel line gave way the first Federal line turned left and right to widen the breach, while the second line passed through to continue the assault. Although this was successful, the failure of follow-up units to come to Upton's support led to him eventually withdrawing.

Grant was impressed with Upton's attack and decided to attempt a similar, but larger assault, this time using a whole corps (81 regiments). Rain delayed the start of it and Lee momentarily assumed that Grant intended to march around his right flank again. But instead, General Winfield S. Hancock's II Corps struck at the apex of the Rebel position and again the Rebels were forced out of their trenches. A counter-attack restored some of the lost ground and the battle turned into a desperate hand-to-hand struggle over an area of ground that became known as the Bloody Angle, forcing Lee to give up the ground and withdraw to a new fortified position behind the old one.

> “GRANT WAS IMPRESSED WITH UPTON'S ATTACK AND DECIDED TO ATTEMPT A SIMILAR ASSAULT”

Children go to war

A charge by the Cadet Battalion of the Virginia Military Institute on 15 May 1864 at the Battle of New Market captured a Federal field piece and contributed to the victory of the Rebel forces under General John Breckinridge.

The Union Army of West Virginia under Major General Franz Sigel, was part of a three-pronged attack into Virginia, master-minded by General Ulysses S. Grant.

Sigel had about 6,000 men and encountered a slightly smaller force under the command of General Breckinridge. Sigel stood to receive the Rebel attack and found himself outflanked by cavalry in his original position. The Federal forces withdrew to a second line, half a mile (0.8 km) behind his original position. The second line fared little better. A cavalry attack on the advancing Rebels was broken up by Rebel artillery firing canister, and Breckinridge sent his troops forward once more to chase the Federal forces away again. The battle ended with a long-range artillery duel.

> “THE UNION ARMY OF WEST VIRGINIA UNDER MAJOR GENERAL FRANZ SIGEL, WAS PART OF A THREE-PRONGED ATTACK INTO VIRGINIA, MASTER-MINDED BY GENERAL ULYSSES S. GRANT”

IN BRIEF

On 11 May 1864, the Ever-Victorious Army, a Western-trained Chinese force commanded by a British officer, Major Charles Gordon, captured the main military base of the Taiping rebels at Chanchufu. This effectively brought the Taiping rebellion to an end.

OVERLAND CAMPAIGN

DATES:	May-June 1864
COMBATANTS:	Union vs Rebel Confederate States of America
FORCES ENGAGED:	USA, 120,000; Rebels, 60,000
CASUALTIES:	USA, 55,000; Rebels, 32,000
RESULT:	Union victory

Åls falls to Prussians, Danes seek peace

A trumpeter appearing in a mural commemorating the battle of Åls in June 1864. The Danish army stood and fought here to protect the approaches to the capital, Copenhagen.

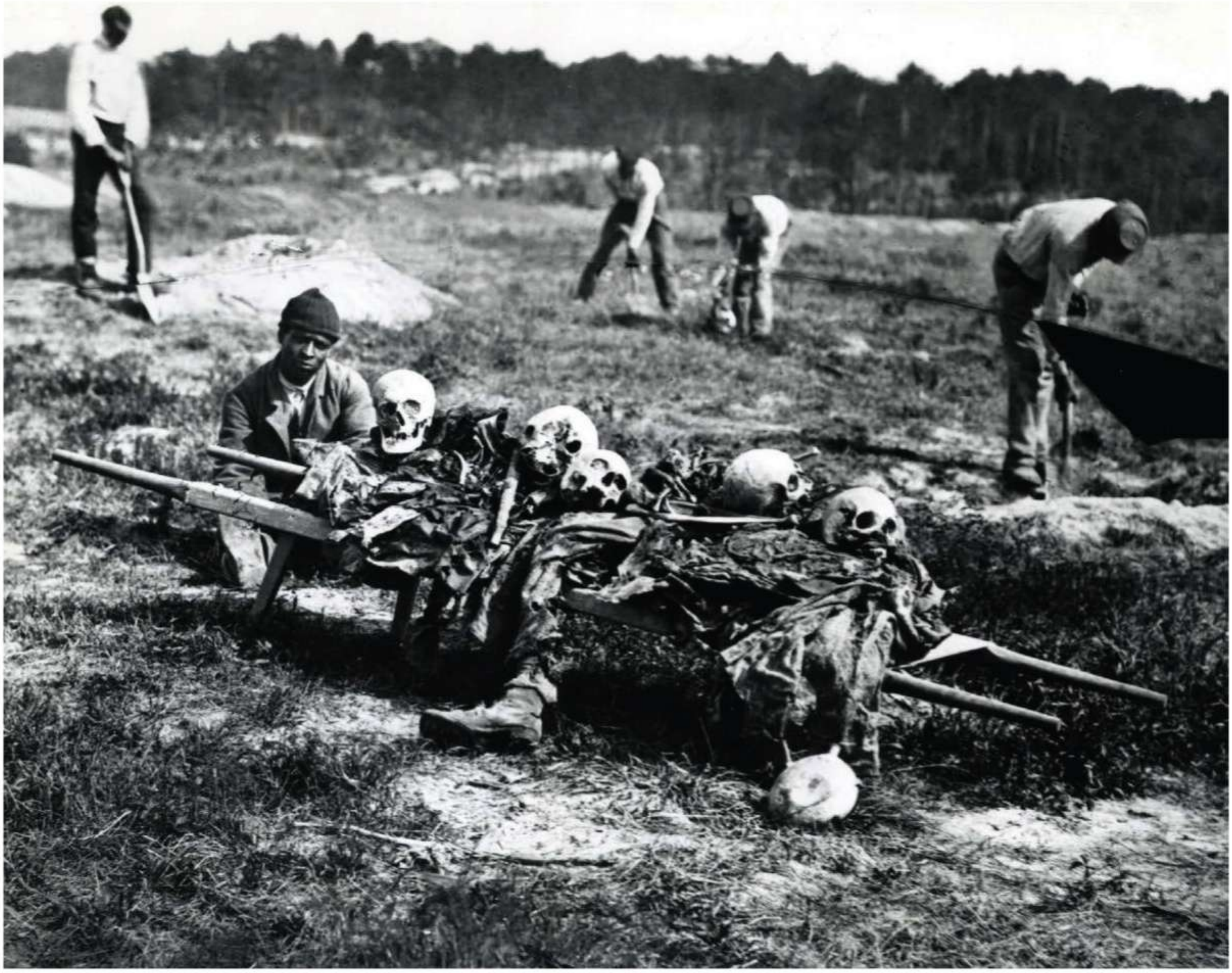
The attempt by little Denmark to resist both Prussia and Austria over control of Schleswig-Holstein came to an end in June 1864 after the fall of Åls to a Prussian assault on 29 June 1864. With negotiations between the two sides already having begun in Britain in April, it was only a matter of time before the Danes agreed to peace terms that would allow both halves of the duchy to pass into German control.

Control of Åls was important to the defence of the Danish capital, Copenhagen. However, the defeat of the combined Austro-Prussian fleet in the Battle of Heligoland on 9 May 1864 meant that any assault by the Prussians would have to take place without naval support. The Prussians, who had succeeded in battering the Danes at Dybbøl with their artillery, began a long preparatory barrage of the Danish defences on 26 May. A month later, on 29 June, the Prussian assault began. The Danish warship Rolf Krake bombarded the flotilla of small craft the Prussians had assembled, and for some time it looked like the assault would fail disastrously. But minor damage led to the Rolf Krake having to retire and the Prussians were able to land on Åls. Once again, Prussian numerical superiority proved decisive and Åls had to be abandoned.

Grant pays butcher's bill for winning position

On 15 June 1864, the Army of the Potomac stood outside the city of Petersburg, Virginia. General Ulysses S. Grant fought the overland campaign from the Rapidan river in northern Virginia all the way to this important rail junction south of Richmond. He now threatened to cut off Lee's supply line to the rest of the Confederacy or to capture Richmond if Lee moved south to protect them. Grant had paid a heavy price to get this far, having lost as many as 65,000 casualties, although Rebel General Robert E. Lee had paid a similarly heavy price – 35,000 from an army half the size of Grant's. This has been the heaviest death toll in American military history for a single campaign.

After withdrawing from Spotsylvania Court House, Grant repeated his manoeuvre round the right flank of Lee's army, only to be stopped by Lee again at North Anna on 23 May. This was perhaps Lee's strongest position of the campaign, as a river would divide Grant's army should he wish to attack. Grant realized the error he had made after a couple of early probes and disengaged before heading south again to Cold Harbor, but then made a bad error. He believed that Lee's army was "whipped", and gambled that one decisive attack might sweep it away. Instead, on 3 June he exposed his men to a slaughter comparable to the carnage at Fredericksburg – a decision he will regret for the rest of his life. Nine days of static trench skirmishing followed before Grant took his army off to Petersburg.



A burial party at work on the Cold Harbor battlefield. Grant's Overland campaign resulted in many casualties in a short space of time, but was a major strategic victory for the Federal army.

General William T. Sherman (standing with hand on gun barrel) together with some of his staff. Sherman's advance on Atlanta relied on manoeuvre to force the Rebels out of their positions.

Federal forces besiege Atlanta

The Federal western armies under the command of General William Tecumseh Sherman have begun their assault on the important city of Atlanta, having fought three battles around it at the end of July 1864. However, with powerful fortifications around the Georgian city, both sides face a stalemate.

Sherman's orders at the outset of the spring 1864 campaigning season required him to defeat the Rebel Army of Tennessee and capture Atlanta as part of a series of attacks planned to put pressure on the Rebel armies of the Confederate States of America at all points. Sherman commanded three separate armies – the Army of the Cumberland, the Army of the Tennessee and the Army of the Ohio – with a total strength of just under 100,000 men.

Sherman repeatedly manoeuvred around the left wing of his opponent, General Joseph Johnston, as he moved from his base at Chattanooga towards Atlanta. In May and June the two commanders fought several battles, as each probed the other's defences in search of a weak point that could be exploited. Resaca on 14–15 May, Adairsville on 17 May and New Hope Church on 25 May were the main engagements as Johnston repeatedly withdrew before Sherman could cut him off from his base. The biggest action occurred at Kennesaw Mountain, on 27 June, where Johnston's army occupied fortified entrenchments and Sherman attempted a rare frontal assault, believing that the length of front was too long for an army of the size Johnston commanded. The Federal soldiers were beaten back, however, suffering 3,000 casualties, the heaviest losses of the campaign so far.

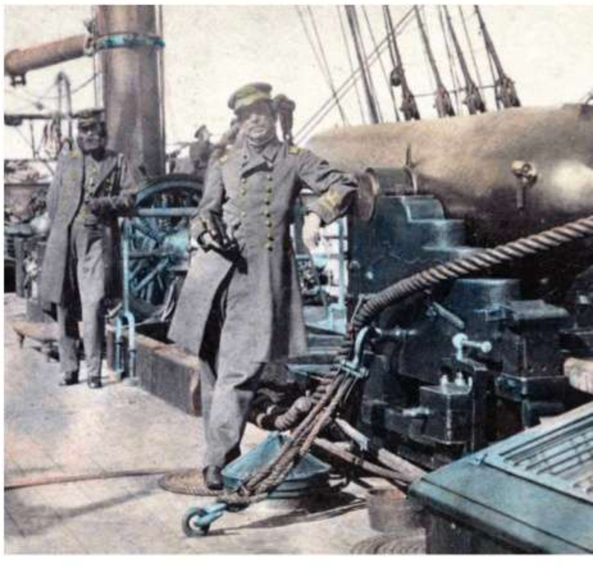
Johnston was forced to withdraw when Sherman once again sent part of his army on a flanking march. Now only 4 miles (6½ km) from Atlanta, Johnston was removed from command by Jefferson Davis, the Rebel president, and replaced by General John B. Hood, an aggressive Texan. Hood attacked Sherman's forces twice – at Peachtree Creek on 20 July and in the Battle of Atlanta on 22 July – but both times the Rebels were forced back with heavy casualties. Sherman now tried another flanking manoeuvre, only for it to be halted by some of Hood's men in the Battle of Ezra Church on 28 July.

Duel in the Channel

A Rebel and a Federal warship arranged a combat off the French coast at Cherbourg on 19 June 1864, resulting in victory for the USS Kearsarge over the CSS Alabama. The Federal victory brought to an end the raiding career of the Alabama, which had captured or sunk shipping valued at an estimated $5 million – at a time when the average monthly wage of a newly enlisted Federal sailor was $12 per month.

The Alabama had arrived in Cherbourg while the Kearsarge was at Flushing in the Netherlands. When word of the Rebel raider's presence in the French port reached the commander of the Kearsarge, Captain John A. Winslow took his ship to intercept her. Winslow and the Alabama's captain, Raphael Semmes, had been friends in the pre-war navy, and even shared accommodation during the Mexican War of 1846–48.

Semmes, whose ship desperately needed some maintenance and repair work, had little choice but to fight his way past the Kearsarge and find another port where work could be done on her. Semmes chose to engage the Federal ship, hoping to keep his opponent at long range where his guns would have an advantage. The battle lasted about an hour and a half, with the two ships circling round seven times before the close-range effectiveness of the Federal sailors' fire proved decisive. With his vessel sinking by the stern, Semmes gave the order to abandon ship.



Captain Raphael Semmes on the CSS Alabama. His cruise was ended by the USS Kearsarge off the French port of Cherbourg.

Surprise disaster in crater

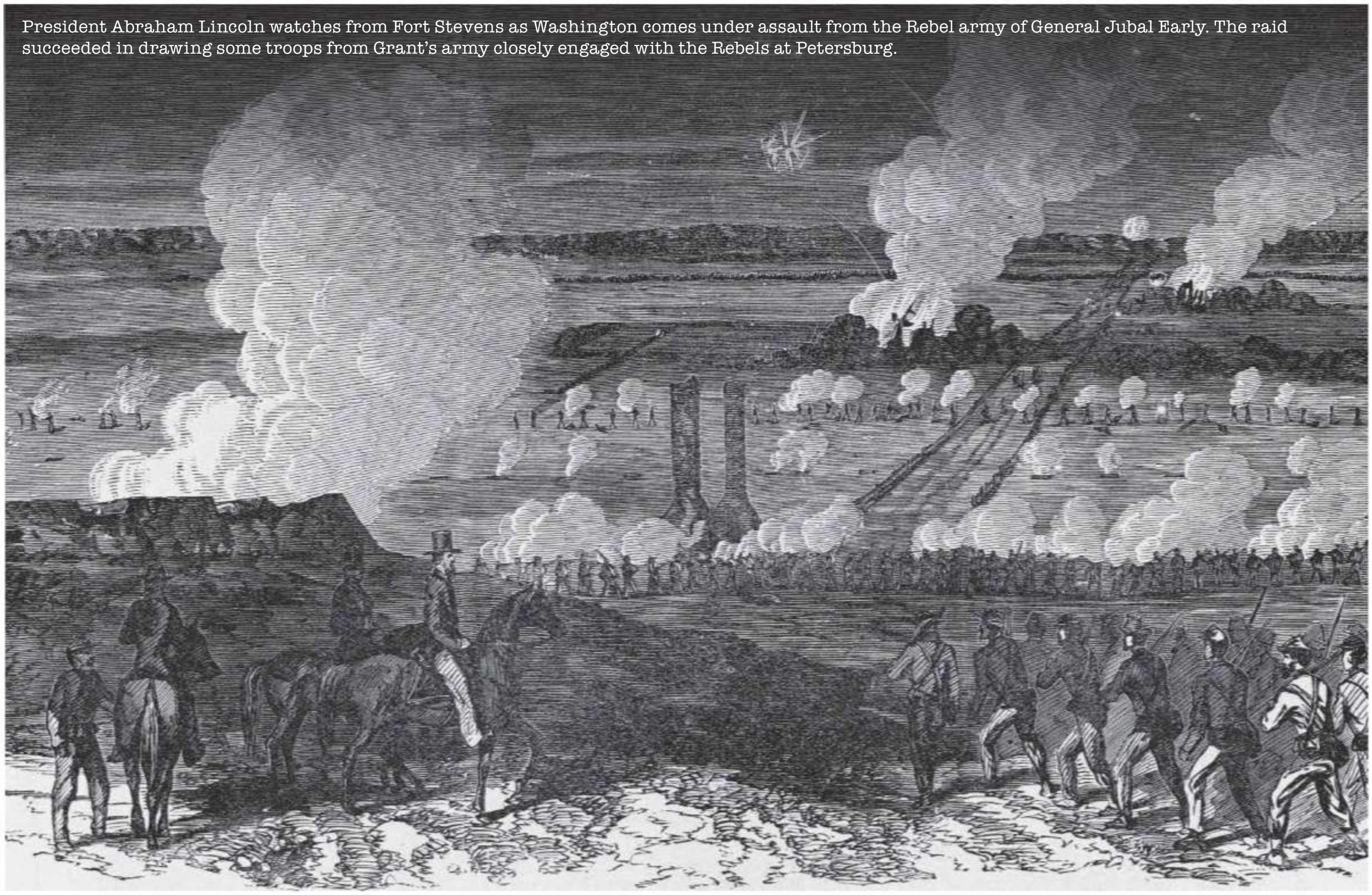
On 30 July 1864, an innovative attack using an explosive mine to destroy Rebel trenches around Petersburg, Virginia, ended in catastrophe for the Federal attackers, forcing General Ulysses S. Grant's Army of the Potomac to continue its siege of the Rebel Army of Northern Virginia, commanded by Robert E. Lee.

Federal troops first probed the Petersburg defences on 9 June, when a force commanded by General Benjamin Butler, advancing from Fort Monroe on the coast, attempted to capture the city, but failed when its cavalry were defeated by a militia consisting of teenagers and old men. Grant's first attempt came six days later, when an attack by part of his army breached the Rebel defences. However, the army had suffered so heavily in the May battles that its commanders were loath to risk the lives of their men.

Rebel deceptions convinced the Federal commander on the spot that the enemy was stronger than in reality, so he waited for reinforcements, losing the opportunity to capture the city at once. However, three more days of fighting were to follow as Lee brought up reinforcements, at the same time as a new, more defensible, trench line was constructed behind the original one.

In July, a plan was adopted to tunnel under the Rebel defences in one sector and detonate 4 tons (3.6 tonnes) of gunpowder. After the explosion, Federal troops would charge through the breach in the lines and take Petersburg. In the event, the operation failed miserably as Federal troops got trapped in the crater and were gunned down by Rebel troops and artillery lining the rim and firing down into them. Over 4,000 Federal soldiers were casualties in what Grant described as "the saddest affair I have witnessed in this war".

Trenches around Petersburg. The lengthy siege of the Virginian city was largely marked by sitting in trenches, with occasional assaults such as the battle of the Crater on 30 July 1864.



President Abraham Lincoln watches from Fort Stevens as Washington comes under assault from the Rebel army of General Jubal Early. The raid succeeded in drawing some troops from Grant's army closely engaged with the Rebels at Petersburg.

Early's raid on Washington

Rebel troops from the Shenandoah Valley launched an offensive that brought them to the outskirts of Washington DC, but on 14 July 1864 General Jubal Early, their commander, ordered his men to retire. Federal reinforcements arrived rapidly from Grant's army, giving Early no chance of success.

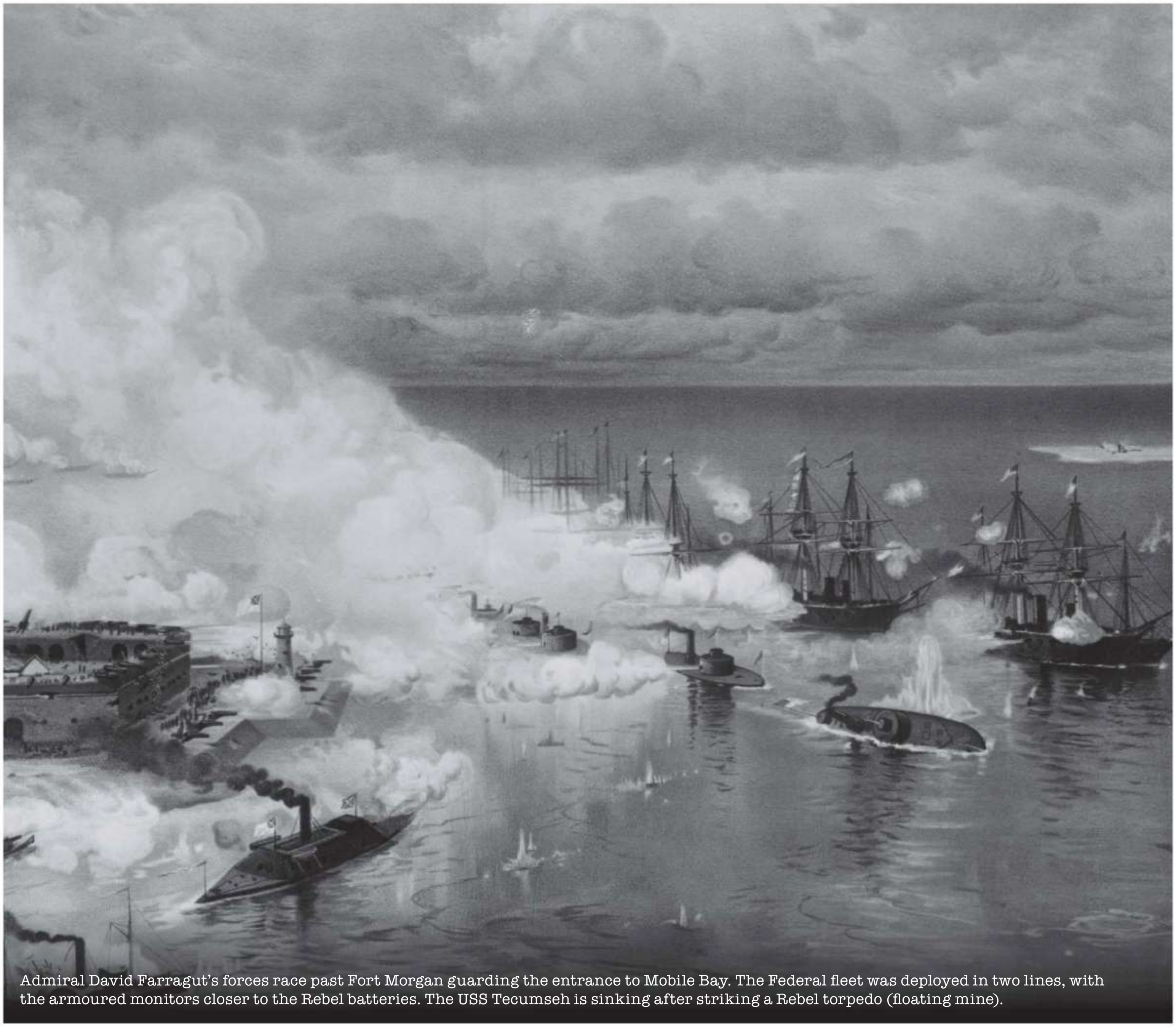
Early had arrived in the Shenandoah Valley after a Federal army had advanced nearly to Lynchburg in mid-June, and General Robert E. Lee sent reinforcements to protect this vital source of supplies for his army. The Rebels now had superior numbers and the Federal forces withdrew toward West Virginia as Early advanced, leaving no substantial organized military force between himself and Washington.

Early's army crossed the Potomac on 6 July 1864. On 9 July, he confronted a Federal army at Monocacy, Maryland, made up of raw recruits and militia. Just before the battle, a division of the Army of the Potomac's VI Corps, which had been ordered to the Washington area in response to Early's sortie, arrived, only to be pushed aside by Early in a frontal attack. All that now stood between Early and Washington was some cavalry, with which his own mounted troops skirmished over the next two days.

On 11 July, Early arrived outside the city, where the fortifications appeared to him to be "feebly manned". He ordered his troops to prepare for a probing attack, but as they were forming up a column of dust signalled the arrival of Federal reinforcements, who filed into Fort Stevens, opened fire with the forts' guns and sent out skirmishers. During the night, two more Federal corps arrived. Early chose to withdraw and succeeded in evading his Federal pursuers.

LINCOLN GOES TO WAR

One of the witnesses to the fighting outside Washington City on 12 July was President Lincoln himself. Having spent several years co-ordinating the movement of hundreds of thousands of men into positions where they were the target of Rebel bullets, Lincoln took this single opportunity he had during the war to share in the danger. Foolhardily, he stood on the parapet which Rebel sharpshooters had been firing at, in order to catch a glimpse of the enemy. Another later to become famous American, serving as a captain in the 20th Massachusetts, spotted the president and shouted, "Get down, you damn fool, before you get shot." An amused Lincoln took future Chief Justice Holmes's advice.



Admiral David Farragut's forces race past Fort Morgan guarding the entrance to Mobile Bay. The Federal fleet was deployed in two lines, with the armoured monitors closer to the Rebel batteries. The USS Tecumseh is sinking after striking a Rebel torpedo (floating mine).

"Damn the torpedoes"

A Federal squadron commanded by the victor of New Orleans, Admiral David Farragut, defeated the Rebel naval defenders of Mobile in the Battle of Mobile Bay on 5 August 1864. Farragut's squadron now occupies Mobile Bay, awaiting the arrival of Federal soldiers to take over this important Rebel-held port.

Farragut had to lead his ships past two forts either side of the entrance to the bay, and then defeat the most powerful of all Rebel ironclads, the CSS Tennessee. The Tennessee mounted six powerful guns and had a thickly armoured casemate resembling the CSS Virginia, but her engines were woefully underpowered for the weight of the vessel.

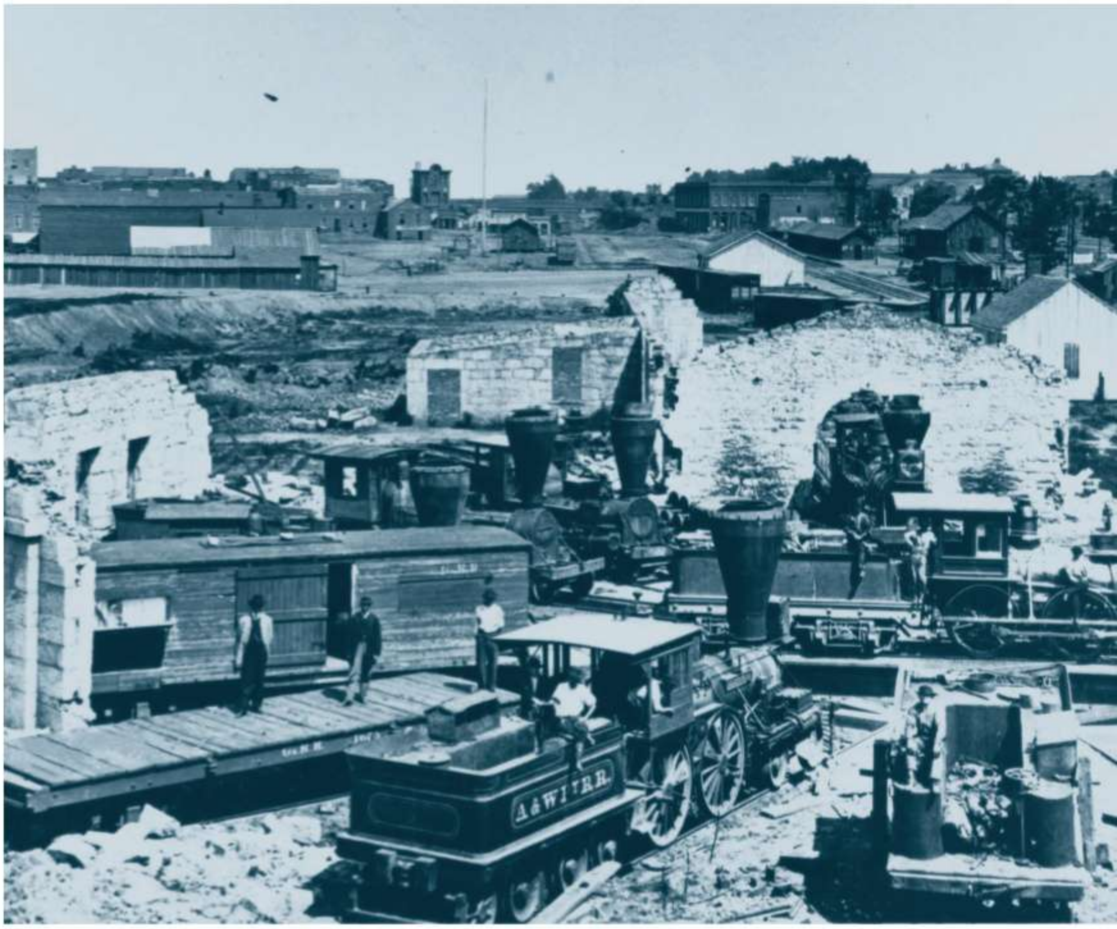
The Rebel defence was based on a chain of floating mines, known as torpedoes, that stretched between the two forts. Farragut believed that by moving at high speed through the harbour entrance, he could escape heavy damage from the forts' guns. The Rebels hoped that the torpedoes would cause the Federal ships to stop under the guns, and that heavy damage would enable the small defending squadron to defeat the larger Federal force. As Farragut's ships reached the torpedoes, one of them, the monitor USS Tecumseh, detonated a torpedo and sank quickly. His ships slowed down but Farragut ordered, "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead," and the squadron entered the bay.

In Mobile Bay, a ferocious mêlée erupted between Farragut's mix of monitors and wooden ships, and the Tennessee. Badly outnumbered and unable to manoeuvre, it was only a matter of time before the Tennessee was pounded into submission.

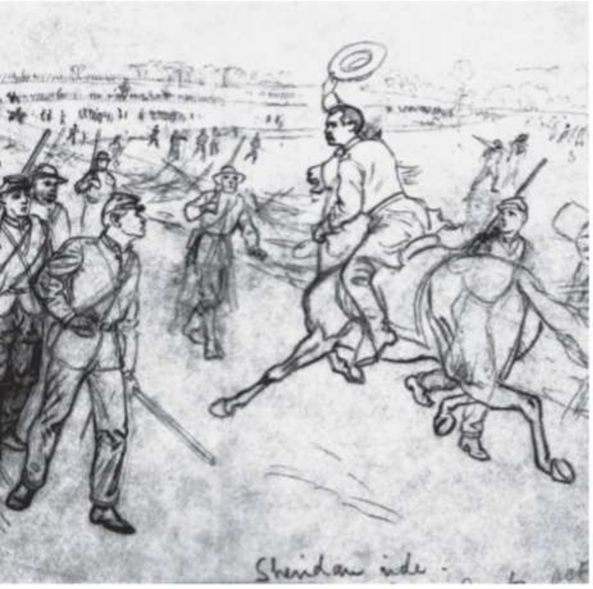
Atlanta falls to Sherman

"Atlanta is ours, and fairly won," reported General William T. Sherman to President Lincoln on 2 September 1864. Using the same skill at manoeuvre that has marked his whole campaign against the Rebel army defending Atlanta, Sherman has managed to get the Rebels to leave their entrenchments, leaving his army free to march into the city. He achieved this by probing at the main supply line used by General John B. Hood's Army of Tennessee, which was well dug in around Atlanta. On 26 August, Sherman pulled almost his entire army out of the siege works and sent it on a long march to target the Macon Railroad at two points: Rough-and-Ready and Jonesborough. Hood at first thought Sherman was in retreat but then realized the truth and rushed half his army to Jonesborough, where battle was joined on 31 August. The Federal forces were held, but the railway was still cut at Rough-and-Ready. With his supply line interrupted, Hood had no choice but to abandon the city.

The railroad yards of Atlanta after their destruction in the fire that damaged the city badly. The fire was set by the retreating Rebel troops abandoning this vital railway junction.



Sheridan in Shenandoah



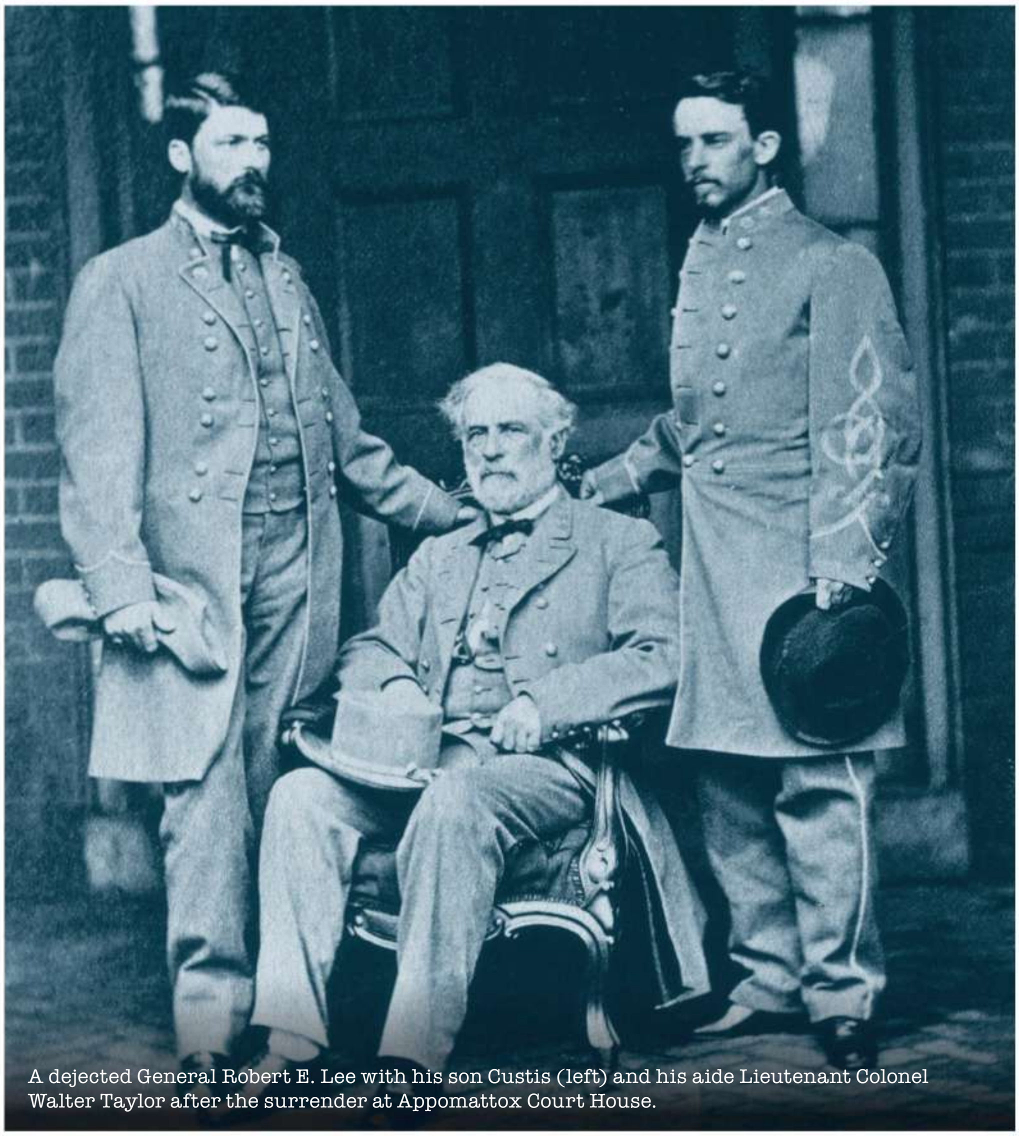
General Philip Sheridan arrives in the midst of the battle of Opequon Creek, on 19 September 1864, to urge his troops on.

A Federal army now dominates the Shenandoah Valley after its victory at Fisher's Hill on 21-22 September 1864. General Philip Sheridan finally achieved what no other Federal commander has managed to do in the entire war – both defeat and drive the Rebels out of the valley. He is now preparing to devastate this rich agricultural region.

After Early had withdrawn from Washington, he first moved through central Maryland, his cavalry force even racing into Pennsylvania, burning the town of Chambersburg when the citizens proved unable to pay a ransom of $500,000 on 30 July 1864. Early returned to Virginia in August.

Early's raid forced Grant to withdraw troops from his army in front of Petersburg, Virginia, and he sent Sheridan, his cavalry commander, to take charge of the newly created Army of the Shenandoah, of 50,000 men, more than twice the 18,000-strong force commanded by Early. Sheridan proceeded uncharacteristically cautiously at first so that Early was able to ensure that the harvest was gathered in at the end of August. The two armies first clashed at Winchester, at the northern end of the valley, at the Battle of Opequon Creek on 19 September, in which Sheridan drove Early out of a strong position, both sides suffering heavy casualties. Three days later, Early had located himself in another strong position at Fisher's Hill. This time Sheridan used a whole day to manoeuvre part of his army into position on the flank of Early's lines, and the late-afternoon attack carried the Rebel defences with relative ease.

"THE RAID FORCED GRANT TO WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM HIS ARMY"



A dejected General Robert E. Lee with his son Custis (left) and his aide Lieutenant Colonel Walter Taylor after the surrender at Appomattox Court House.

Lee surrenders – Civil War ends

General Robert E. Lee surrendered his Rebel army on 9 April 1865, having abandoned Petersburg and having been chased across Virginia by the Federal army commanded by General Ulysses S. Grant.

Lee had to abandon Petersburg after the defeat of part of his army that he had sent to Five Forks – along which ran his last supply route from Petersburg to the south, the South Side Railroad – on 1 April 1865. Once out of the trenches, he moved in a south-westerly direction heading toward Lynchburg, Virginia, in an attempt to escape the much larger Federal army. After capturing Petersburg, Grant was able to advance northward to capture Richmond, the Rebel capital, which had been abandoned by the Rebel government on April 2.

At Appomattox Court House the Army of Northern Virginia found Federal troops both to their front and rear. Virtually surrounded, Lee opted to surrender rather than fight to the death.

On 26 April 1865, General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered his Rebel army at Bennett's Place, North Carolina, to General William T. Sherman. Johnston had tried to evade Sherman until Lee could come and join him, but the surrender of Lee removed even this last hope. The last major Rebel force, the Trans-Mississippi Department, surrendered on 26 May 1865.

Hood's folly

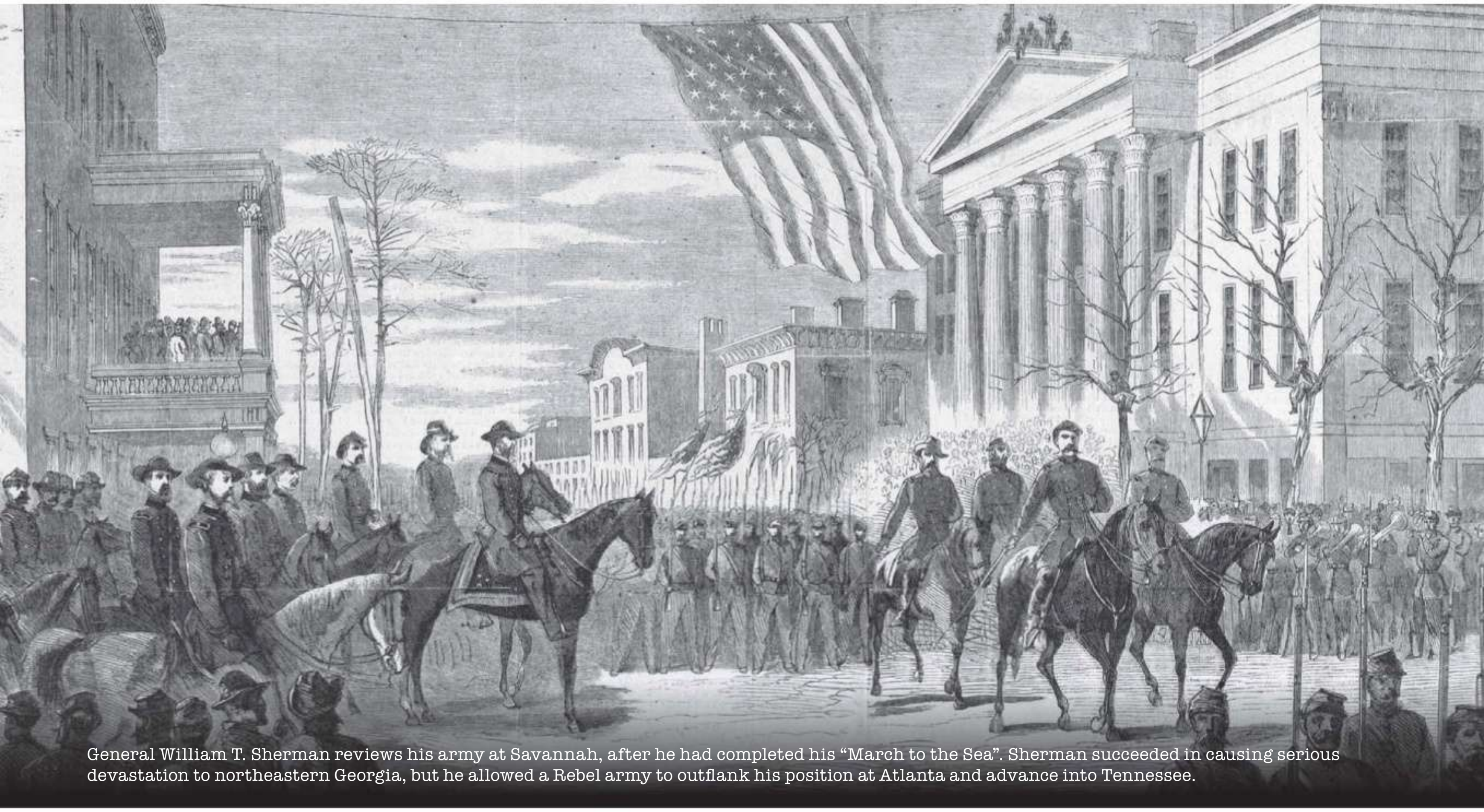
After suffering a disastrous defeat at Nashville, Tennessee, on 16 December 1864, Rebel General John B. Hood retreated to Tupelo, Mississippi, and resigned his command on 23 January 1865. The Rebel Army of Tennessee has more or less ceased to be an effective force in the field.

Hood's mistake was to wage a campaign against the supply lines of the Federal army commanded by General William T. Sherman. Hood had discussed this idea with President Jefferson Davis when he visited the Rebel commander at his headquarters. At the time Sherman was still at Atlanta, but he planned to leave the Georgian city and march to the coast at Savannah, destroying everything in his path.

Once Sherman was on the move, Hood turned north and advanced into Tennessee. He gambled that he could defeat the Federal forces left there and gather new recruits for his army from Tennessee and Kentucky. Unfortunately, almost everything went wrong for Hood, in part thanks to his own miscalculations, when he launched a futile frontal attack on a Federal army at Franklin, Tennessee on 30 November, leading to the deaths of six of his generals and over 6,000 of his men. His outnumbered opponent retreated to Nashville, where Hood's army was badly beaten and routed off the field.

General John Hood's bravery was never in doubt, but his desperate assaults on Federal positions in Tennessee destroyed his army.

Marching through Georgia



General William T. Sherman reviews his army at Savannah, after he had completed his “March to the Sea”. Sherman succeeded in causing serious devastation to northeastern Georgia, but he allowed a Rebel army to outflank his position at Atlanta and advance into Tennessee.

A Federal army commanded by General William T. Sherman reached the Georgian port of Savannah on the Atlantic coast on 22 December 1864. Sherman telegraphed Lincoln: “I beg to present you as a Christmas gift the City of Savannah.”

Sherman had become increasingly frustrated by Rebel strategy after capturing Atlanta. Instead of offering battle, both the Rebel cavalry and the Army of Tennessee concentrated their efforts on harassing Sherman’s lengthy supply line, which stretched all the way from northern states such as Ohio and Illinois to Atlanta, passing through Nashville and Chattanooga. Such a long line required the diversion of a large part of Sherman’s army to protect it, so long as he was stationary in Atlanta. However, he realized that if he sent part of his army back into Tennessee, and marched with the rest to the coast, the problem would be solved. Those on the march could live off the rich agricultural land of northern Georgia, while those sent back to Tennessee would have a much shorter supply line and be able to use more of their numbers in combat.

Grant, in overall command of the Federal war effort, agreed and gave permission for Sherman’s “March to the Sea”. Sherman divided his army into two columns, marching approximately 60 miles (96 km) apart. On the way, they took anything they needed with them, at the same time destroying everything else.

The consequence was a swathe of savage devastation across Georgia. With few Rebel soldiers in the area, Sherman faced no resistance and captured Savannah after a long artillery bombardment.

IN BRIEF

On 12 October 1864, a Brazilian attempt to influence Uruguayan domestic politics became an invasion when Brazilian soldiers crossed into Uruguay. Paraguay had offered to mediate in the dispute and, angered by the Brazilian act, captured a Brazilian ship on the River Paraguay. On 13 December, Paraguay declared war on Brazil, and on 18 March 1865 on Argentina, which had refused to allow its troops to cross its territory, and on Uruguay. On 15 January 1865 a combined assault by Federal ships and infantry captured the Rebels’ Fort Fisher, outside Wilmington, North Carolina. The fort had been almost impregnable for most of the war, being built from sand and grass that just absorbed the impact of shells. It was well equipped with artillery and well defended with landmines and other explosive devices.

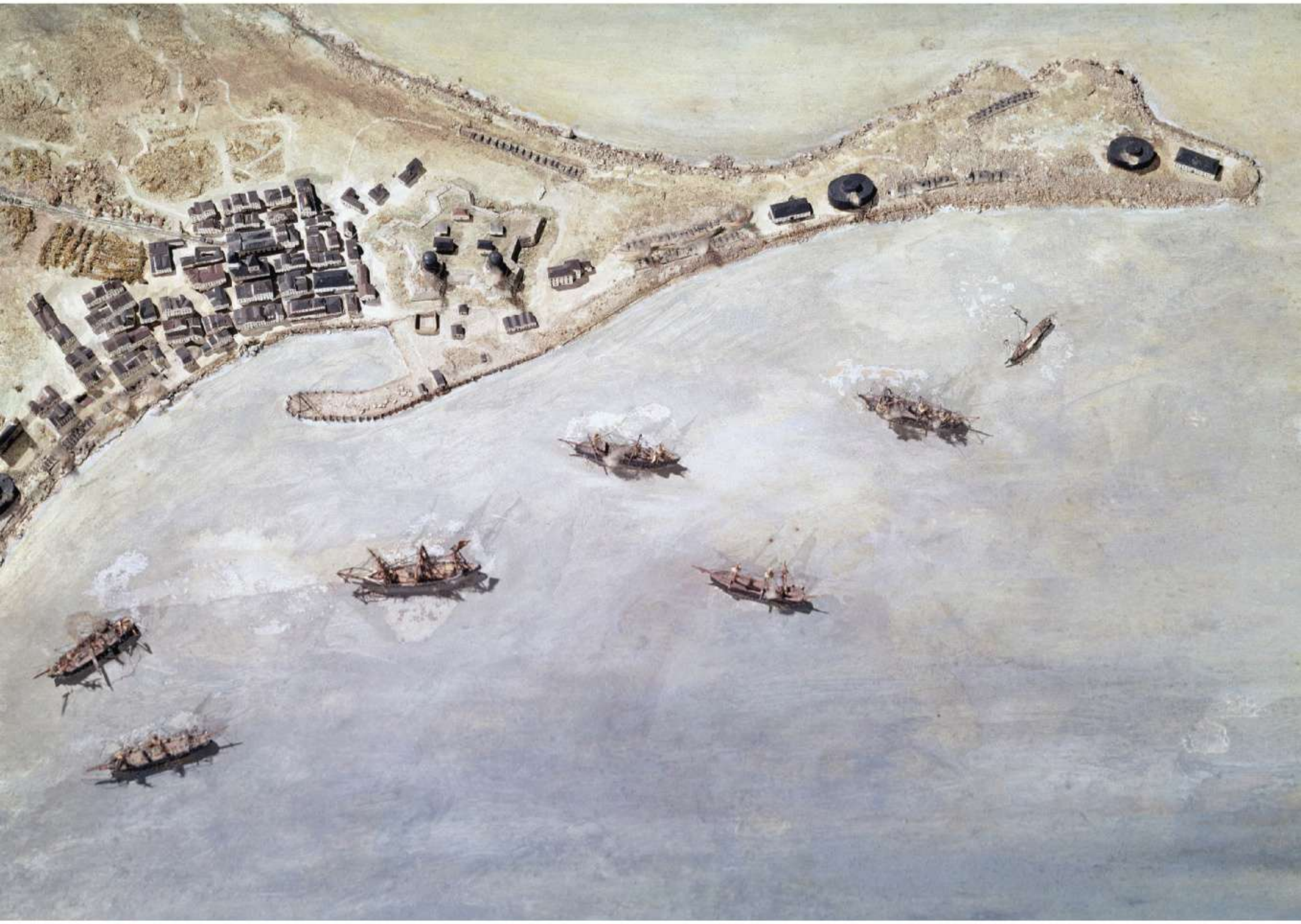
Ships and honour

A Spanish attempt to seize control of the guano-rich Chincha Islands resulted in the bombardment of the important Peruvian port of El Callao on 2 May 1866. A powerful Spanish squadron including the ironclad frigate Numancia spent nearly five hours firing on the batteries defending the port.

The Spanish were rumoured to be seeking to re-annex Peru and Chile and benefit from the wealthy guano trade from which these two countries profited. However, the British and Americans opposed the Spanish ambitions, and at one point a confrontation between American and Spanish ships in Valparaiso harbour resulted in the famous quotation from Admiral Casto Méndez Núñez that "Spain, the Queen and I prefer honour without ships than ships without honour."

At Callao, Méndez Núñez led his ships into the harbour in a V formation to engage the Peruvians. For five hours the two sides battered one another until the Spanish withdrew. Both sides claimed victory, but the Spanish had suffered more heavily - Méndez Núñez was wounded nine times himself - and in the end the war was abandoned.

> "AT CALLAO, MÉNDEZ NÚÑEZ LED HIS SHIPS INTO THE HARBOUR IN A V FORMATION TO ENGAGE THE PERUVIANS. FOR FIVE HOURS THE TWO SIDES BATTERED ONE ANOTHER UNTIL THE SPANISH WITHDREW"



The Spanish bombardment of the Peruvian port of Callao on 2 May 1866. Spain attempted to reassert a measure of control over Latin America by its seizure of the Chincha islands in 1864.

WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

DATES:	1864–1870
COMBATANTS:	Paraguay and Uruguayan rebels vs Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay
FORCES ENGAGED:	Unknown
CASUALTIES:	Paraguay, 300,000; Allies, 125,000
RESULT:	Allied victory

Paraguayans fend off Triple Alliance

An attempt by the Triple Alliance of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay to break through a key Paraguayan fortress at Humaitá, Paraguay, failed on 22 September 1866. Allied morale has collapsed and it is clear it will be some time before they are ready to advance again.

The allies faced a serious problem in taking Humaitá as the Paraguayans had constructed a series of successive trench lines and batteries that made it difficult to use their naval superiority on the Paraguay river. On 2 September, a heartening success was achieved when after some hard fighting the battery at Curuzu fell to the allies. The fort at Curupayty was the obvious next target.

On 22 September, after a brief truce, the allies launched their assault on Curupayty. It was preceded by a lengthy naval bombardment, but this had little initial effect the Paraguayans had constructed a moat in front of their first trench line. Once the allies had finally achieved a breach there, they discovered the Paraguayans had constructed a second trench line, packed with artillery. This unexpected development threw the allied attack into confusion and they were forced to retreat. The allies lost about 5,000 men, the Paraguayans less than a hundred.

> “THE FORT AT CURUPAYTY WAS THE OBVIOUS NEXT TARGET”

Irish Nationalists invade Niagara

> “CANADIAN MILITIA ADVANCED FROM PORT COLBORNE”

A group of Civil War veterans, members of an Irish Nationalist movement known as the Fenian Brotherhood, withdrew from the Niagara peninsula following a raid on Canada that resulted in the Battle of Ridgeway on 2 June 1866. However, many of the Fenians were subsequently arrested, after they returned to the United States on 3 June.

US authorities attempted to intercept the raiders at Buffalo, once they had assembled there. However, about a thousand of them succeeded in crossing the Niagara river. Canadian militia advanced from Port Colborne and met the Fenians. The Canadians were defeated when a few Fenians on stolen horses were mistakenly identified as cavalry, and a move into square formation and back to column was misinterpreted by a neighbouring Canadian regiment as a retreat.

OBITUARY

General Winfield Scott in 1861: his physical appearance belied a shrewd, tactical mind.

Winfield Scott (1786–1866)

General Winfield Scott has died at West Point, New York. He was aged 79.

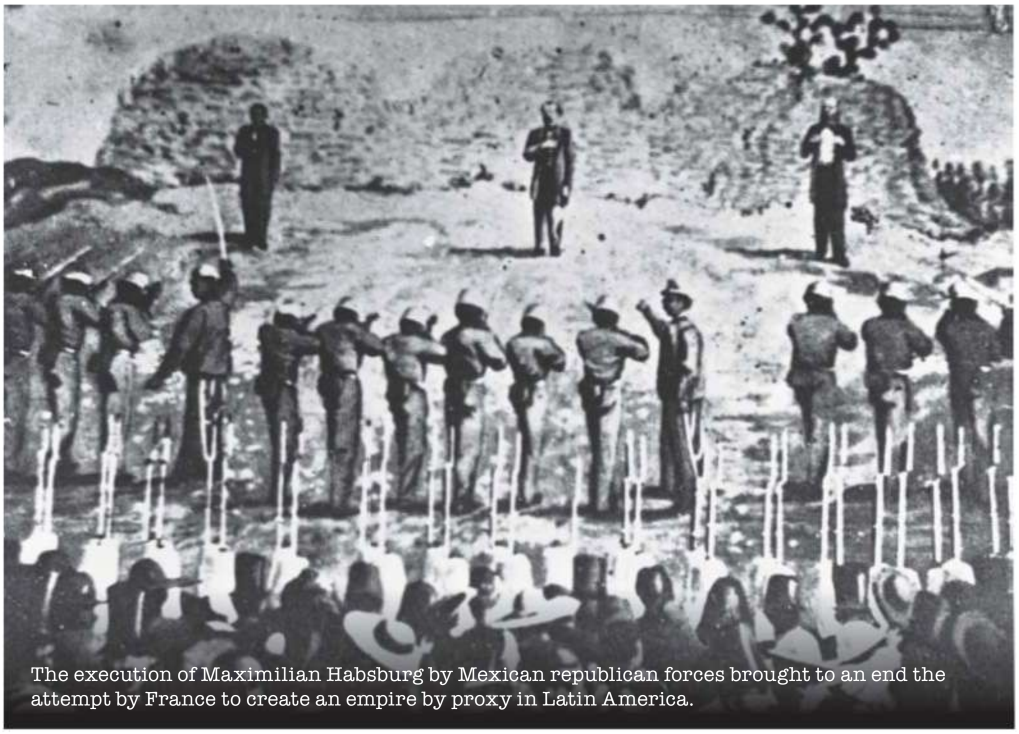
Scott was one of the most influential American generals in history. He entered the army in 1807 as a militiaman and served in the War of 1812 between Britain and the United States. During this conflict, he established that the main problem confronting American forces was a lack of discipline. He instituted a stern regime of training and uniform and earned the sobriquet “Old Fuss and Feathers”.

On 5 July 1841, he became commander-in-chief of the army, a position he would hold for the next 20 years. He captured Mexico City in the Mexican-American War of 1846–48 and was the defeated candidate in the presidential election of 1852.

In 1861, during the American Civil War, the now elderly Scott found himself the target of a press campaign that called for his removal and replacement by a younger, more energetic man as Federal army commander. However, the broad outlines of Scott’s strategy, the Anaconda Plan, which envisioned capturing the Mississippi and blockading southern ports, actually proved to be the winning strategy for the Federal in the war.

He never married.

France's Mexican adventure ends tragically



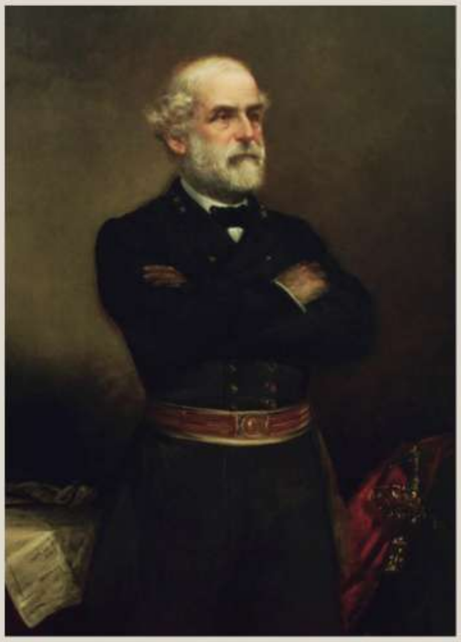
The execution of Maximilian Habsburg by Mexican republican forces brought to an end the attempt by France to create an empire by proxy in Latin America.

The French attempt to establish a puppet government in Mexico ended on 19 June 1867 with the execution of Maximilian Habsburg, who had volunteered to become emperor of a regime backed by Mexican conservatives and foreign investors. On 20 June, Maximilian's last significant concentration of supporters surrendered in Mexico City.

In June 1864, when Maximilian arrived in Mexico City, the French army was victorious on all fronts against the republicans of the country. However, with the end of the civil war in the United States, the republicans began receiving substantial amounts of weapons from the Americans, who opposed the French intervention.

Throughout 1866, the republicans began reversing the gains of the French and the imperialists. The French had already planned to withdraw their troops, preferring Maximilian to use his own resources and those of his Mexican allies to defend their regime. These troops, however, were for the most part unreliable, and American pressure ensured that the volunteers Maximilian had recruited in Belgium and Austria were forced to leave. Local Mexican troops tended to switch sides depending on who was winning. In February 1867, the last French troops left Mexico. In April, the city of Puebla, an important conservative centre, fell to the republicans and Mexico City was placed under siege. Maximilian was captured in May, trying to escape from the siege of Querétaro where most of his army had been trapped.

> “THE FRENCH ARMY WAS VICTORIOUS ON ALL FRONTS AGAINST THE REPUBLICANS”



OBITUARY

Robert E. Lee (1807-1870)

The most successful Rebel general in the recent civil war in the United States has died at the age of 63 in Lexington, Virginia.

Robert E. Lee's father, Henry Lee, was a hero of the Revolutionary War and Lee grew up in Virginia. He considered that his first loyalty was to his state and when it left the Federal in April 1861, so did he. Lee had been a career army officer prior to Virginia's secession. He distinguished himself in the Mexican War of 1846–48, and also served as superintendent of West Point.

He could have been a very senior officer in the Federal army, but instead created a legendary career for himself as commander of the Rebel Army of Northern Virginia. On some occasions he was helped by the poor calibre of the opposing generals, rather than his own brilliance as a tactician.

He died of complications following a stroke, and is survived by his wife and seven children.

> “HE CREATED A CAREER FOR HIMSELF AS COMMANDER OF THE REBEL ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA”

Paraguayan dictator killed, ending war

The dictator of Paraguay, Francisco Solano López, was killed in the Battle of Cerro-Corá on 1 March 1870. His attempts to wage a guerrilla war against the predominantly Brazilian occupiers of his country have ended in failure.

After the battles of 1866, the War of the Triple Alliance became bogged down in front of the Paraguayan fortress of Humaitá. The defences were so strong that the Allies abandoned any attempts at a frontal assault and spent the best part of a year gradually extending their siege lines around the sprawling fortress. Solano López thought an assault on the allied base at Tuyutí might break the siege, but his attempt in November 1867 only succeeded in seizing some allied artillery and supplies. In March 1868 Solano López withdrew most of the garrison of Humaitá, leaving just enough troops to delay the allies. The inevitable surrender occurred in August 1868.

> “ACCORDING TO SOME ESTIMATES, ONLY 29,000 MALE PARAGUAYANS OF MILITARY AGE REMAINED AFTER THE WAR'S END”

The allies now advanced toward the Paraguayan capital of Asunción and in December 1868, the Paraguayans attempted to halt the advance, but were defeated in three battles. Asunción was occupied on 5 January 1869. Solano López continued the struggle with a small force, but he had no secure source of supplies and the heavy casualties from previous battles had dramatically reduced the number of men in the population of Paraguay. According to some estimates, only 29,000 male Paraguayans of military age remained after the war's end, out of a pre-war population of half a million.

OBITUARY

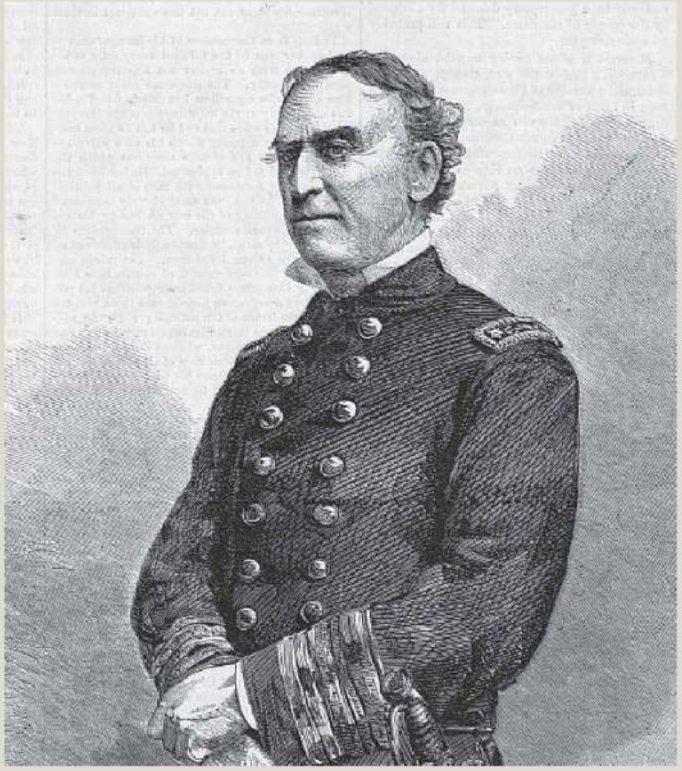
David Farragut (1801-1870)

Civil War admiral David Farragut has died in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

He was born in Tennessee, but his parents were residing in Louisiana when his mother died of yellow fever in 1808. He was then adopted by Commodore David Porter, who offered him the chance of a career in the navy. Farragut accepted, aged 11, served with Commodore Porter in the War of 1812 and commanded several vessels between 1834 and the outbreak of the American Civil War. He also founded the naval base at Mare Island, in California.

Farragut had no sympathy for the Rebels so there was no question in his mind of siding with the Rebel cause, but he was limited to shore duties until December 1861, when he was given command of the expedition against New Orleans. He was also active in campaigns along the Mississippi river after the fall of New Orleans. In November 1864 he effectively left war service.

In 1866, Farragut was made a full admiral, the first in US naval history. His last active service was a cruise of European waters in 1867.



IN BRIEF

The capture of the Ethiopian fortress of Magdala on 13 April 1868 by British troops was followed by the suicide of the king, Theodore II, who had believed the place to be impregnable, and the release of his hostages. A British army had invaded Ethiopia in January 1868 to release British hostages taken by Theodore, who believed Queen Victoria had insulted him. After advancing inland from the coast across hot lowlands and into mountainous countryside, they defeated the Ethiopian army and assaulted the fortress.

The Franco-Prussian War (1870–71)

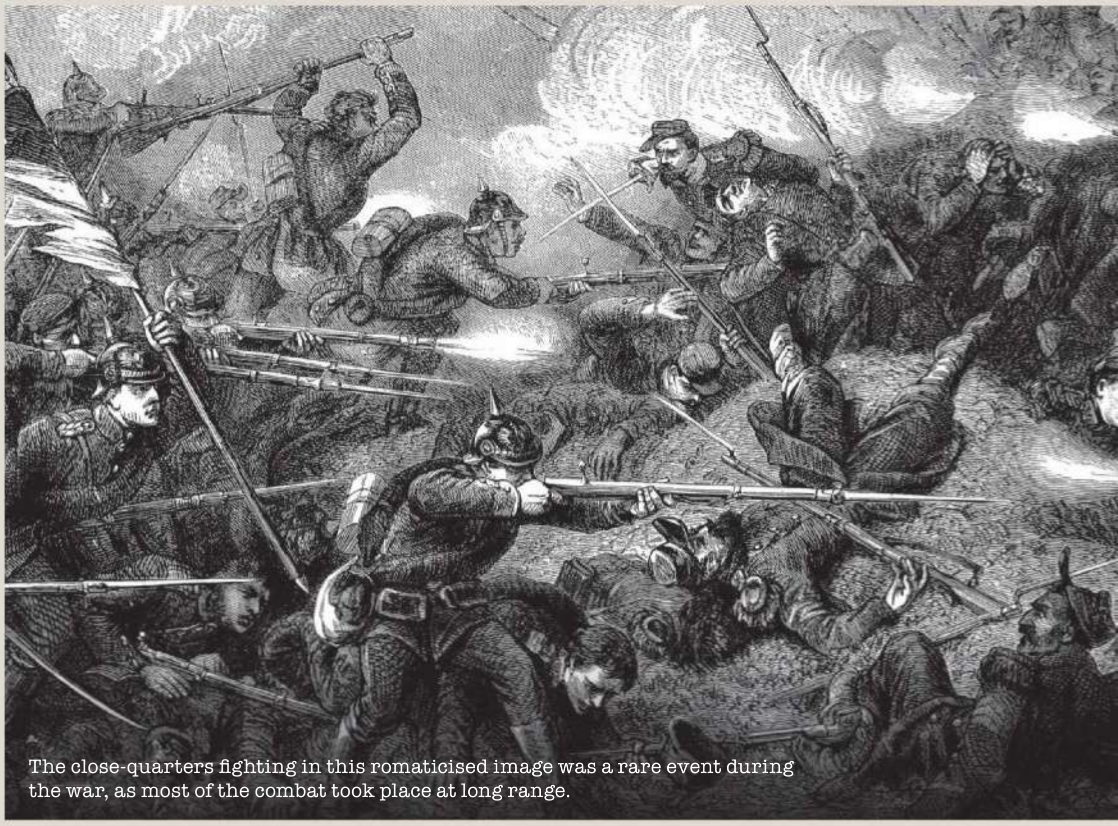
This conflict between the French empire and a confederation of German states began as a war reminiscent of the eighteenth century, over the possibility of a relative of the Prussian king becoming king of Spain. In its aftermath came a revolutionary moment that was to be an inspiration for generations of socialists.

The quick Prussian victory over the Austrian empire in 1866 had not only alarmed the French emperor, Napoleon III, it also created a new rival to France as the leading European military power. Since the fall of Napoleon I in 1814-1815, successive French governments had established their country as something of an arbiter of Europe's destiny. In the 1820s, troops had been sent to Spain to resolve a civil war there; in the 1830s, a crisis in Belgium had similarly been resolved in the French interest; in the 1850s, Napoleon III had fought and won wars with both Russia and the Austrian empire, imposing his French-oriented solution on European problems involving these nations.

However, while France was attempting to establish an empire of its own in Mexico, the Prussian Minister-President Otto von Bismarck was turning Prussia into the dominant power in Germany, then a collection of independent kingdoms and principalities, nominally owing allegiance to the Austrian emperor. When Leopold, a distant cousin of King Wilhelm, was offered the Spanish throne in February 1870, Napoleon III saw an opportunity for a showdown between the growing power of Prussia and the traditional power of France. An ambassador was sent to Wilhelm, who reported the results of the talks to Bismarck by telegram. Bismarck edited the text of the telegram before releasing it. The edited words were far more offensive to the French than the original text and the outraged French government declared war on 19 July 1870.

Both countries mobilized their armies. The French expected to find support from Denmark and Austria, who had both recently lost wars against Prussia and other German states. Little had been done beforehand to organize an alliance against Prussia among them, and the German states of Baden, Bavaria and Württemberg joined with Prussia, but Austria and Denmark remained neutral.

> “ON 16 AUGUST 1870, AT THE BATTLE OF MARS-LA-TOUR, AN OUTNUMBERED FORCE OF PRUSSIANS HALTED THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE FRENCH FORCES”



The close-quarters fighting in this romaticised image was a rare event during the war, as most of the combat took place at long range.

The mobilization of the French army was chaotic; by contrast, the Prussian mobilization proceeded efficiently. The armies were on the move by the beginning of July, and three crucial battles were fought in succession on 4–6 August at Wissembourg, Spicheren and Froeschwiller, as a result of which the French forces retreated from the frontiers. These early battles demonstrated the technical superiority of the French infantry's rifle, the Chassepot, while the Germans also discovered their artillery to be far superior to that of the French. The pattern for all future engagements was established: the French soldiers would halt German attacks with rifle fire, until they were swept from their positions either by superior numbers or by shelling from the Prussian guns.

The opening battles shocked the French leaders. Napoleon III appointed a new commander of the Army of the Rhine, Marshal Achille Bazaine, and went to Châlons to organize a new army to counter the Prussian invasion of France. All French commanders realized the army at Metz was at risk of being trapped. Bazaine pushed his army in the direction of Verdun, from where it could co-ordinate attacks with the new force organized by the emperor.

But Bazaine did not move fast enough. On 16 August 1870, at the Battle of Mars-la-Tour, an outnumbered force of Prussians, believing it was engaging the rearguard of Bazaine's army, halted the withdrawal of the French forces. The battle was fierce and marked by Bazaine's inability to recognize the weakness of the army opposed to him. The Prussians succeeded in blocking the road to Verdun and Bazaine decided to withdraw, resupply his army and advance again. He therefore retired

> “THE DECISIVE ENGAGEMENT OF THE WAR WAS FOUGHT AT SEDAN ON 1 SEPTEMBER 1870. MACMAHON’S FORCES WERE ON THE VERGE OF BEING ENCIRCLED AS THE BATTLE BEGAN”

An early combat photograph showing part of the battlefield of Sedan on 2 September 1870. The battle was a masterpiece of Prussian staff work, as the French army was pinned and encircled, and eventually surrendered.

to positions around the village of Gravelotte, where he was attacked by two Prussian armies on the 18th.

The Battle of Gravelotte foreshadowed the carnage of the First World War, with attacking forces suffering heavily from the fire of defenders, the Prussians thinking there were far fewer Frenchmen present than there actually were. Generals on both sides showed operational incompetence, using tactics that would condemn thousands of their soldiers to death or wounding, and failing to take effective advantage of such success as was achieved. Mars-la-Tour and Gravelotte resulted in 36,000 Prussian and 28,000 French casualties, but at least the Prussians had the consolation of victory. Bazaine withdrew to Metz, where he was besieged and played no further part in the war, until his surrender in October.

Napoleon’s second army, the Army of Châlons, now faced the urgent task of retrieving the situation – the Prussians had to be kept away from Paris, while Bazaine needed to be released from the siege of Metz. The Army of Châlons’ commander, Marshal Patrice MacMahon, eventually was given orders to attempt the relief of Bazaine and moved north, aiming to catch the Prussians advancing on Paris on the flank. The Prussian commander, Helmuth von Moltke, left about half his forces to besiege Bazaine and with the other half advanced against MacMahon, placing his forces between the French army and Paris. The decisive engagement of the war was fought at Sedan on 1 September 1870. MacMahon’s forces were on the verge of being encircled as the battle began and by nightfall were indeed surrounded, including among their number, Napoleon III. The battle had been one-sided, with 17,000 French casualties to 9,000 Prussian; Napoleon and his army surrendered the next day. With the head of state in Prussian hands, the French might have been expected to capitulate, but they overthrew the regime and established a Government of National Defence. When Paris was besieged on 19 September, the Government of National Defence attempted to organize armies outside Paris that would attack the besiegers and free the city. One government minister, Leon Gambetta, left Paris in a balloon for Orléans to co-ordinate the effort.

This phase of the war saw makeshift French armies desperately trying to cut Prussian supply lines and fight their way through to Paris, but each attempt was defeated. There were too many trained, battle-experienced Prussian soldiers, with too much artillery, for the French to overcome them. On 28 January 1871, the government in Paris secured an armistice. When Gambetta received the news on 30 January at Tours, he at first refused to give up and launched another failed attack directed at Orléans, which had fallen to the Prussians in December. Gambetta resigned under pressure from the Government of National Defence on 6 February, and the war finally ended.

Parisian Communards behind a barricade. The collapse of French national political authority brought the first attempt to establish a socialist regime in world history.

> “WHEN GAMBETTA RECEIVED THE NEWS ON 30 JANUARY AT TOURS, HE AT FIRST REFUSED TO GIVE UP AND LAUNCHED ANOTHER FAILED ATTACK DIRECTED AT ORLÉANS”

Russians battle winter, Ottomans to victory

A Russian army stands on the brink of a major victory over the Ottomans as it occupies Adrianople on 20 January 1878, after a brief but successful battle three days earlier. Constantinople will almost certainly be captured if the British are not prepared to go to war with Russia over the fate of the Ottoman Empire.

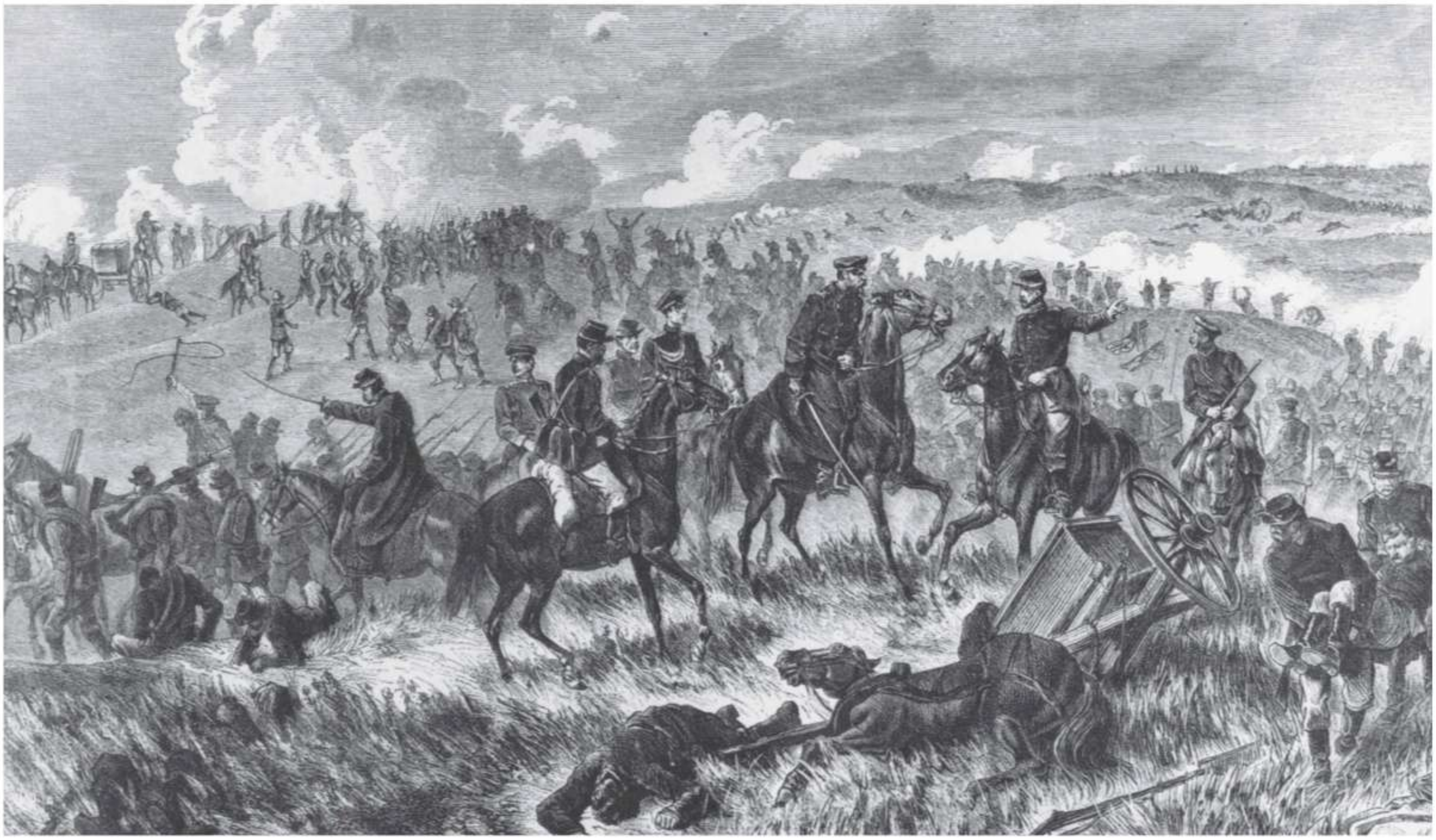
The war developed from a series of revolts, beginning in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the summer of 1875. In Constantinople, the Sultan was deposed in May 1876 by those opposed to his policies of conciliating the Ottoman Empire's traditional rival, Russia. This was followed in June 1876 by the claimed massacre of up to 12,000 Bulgarians after a revolt. Serbia and Montenegro, supporters of the rebels, in turn declared war on the Ottomans, having secretly been assured of the support of Russia. However, in September 1876 the Serbs were badly beaten by the Ottomans, to the surprise of the Russians, who now threatened the Ottoman Empire with war. A diplomatic conference could not avert the conflict and the Tsar declared war on the Sultan on 24 April 1877.

The Russians miscalculated the strength of the Ottoman army. An advance into Bulgaria brought them to the town of Plevna, where they attacked on 20 July and were badly beaten. Both sides sought reinforcements and the Ottomans dug extensive entrenchments before a second Russian attack was driven off again with very heavy casualties. The Russians now retreated from some of their gains to concentrate on the siege of Plevna, and then it was the turn of the Ottomans to attack at Shipka Pass, in August, where they in turn suffered heavy losses.

A third assault on Plevna was made on 11 September, before the Russians settled for a blockade hoping that hunger would end Ottoman resistance. In December 1877, the garrison of Plevna capitulated and in January 1878 the Russians broke through the Shipka Pass, opening the way to Constantinople.

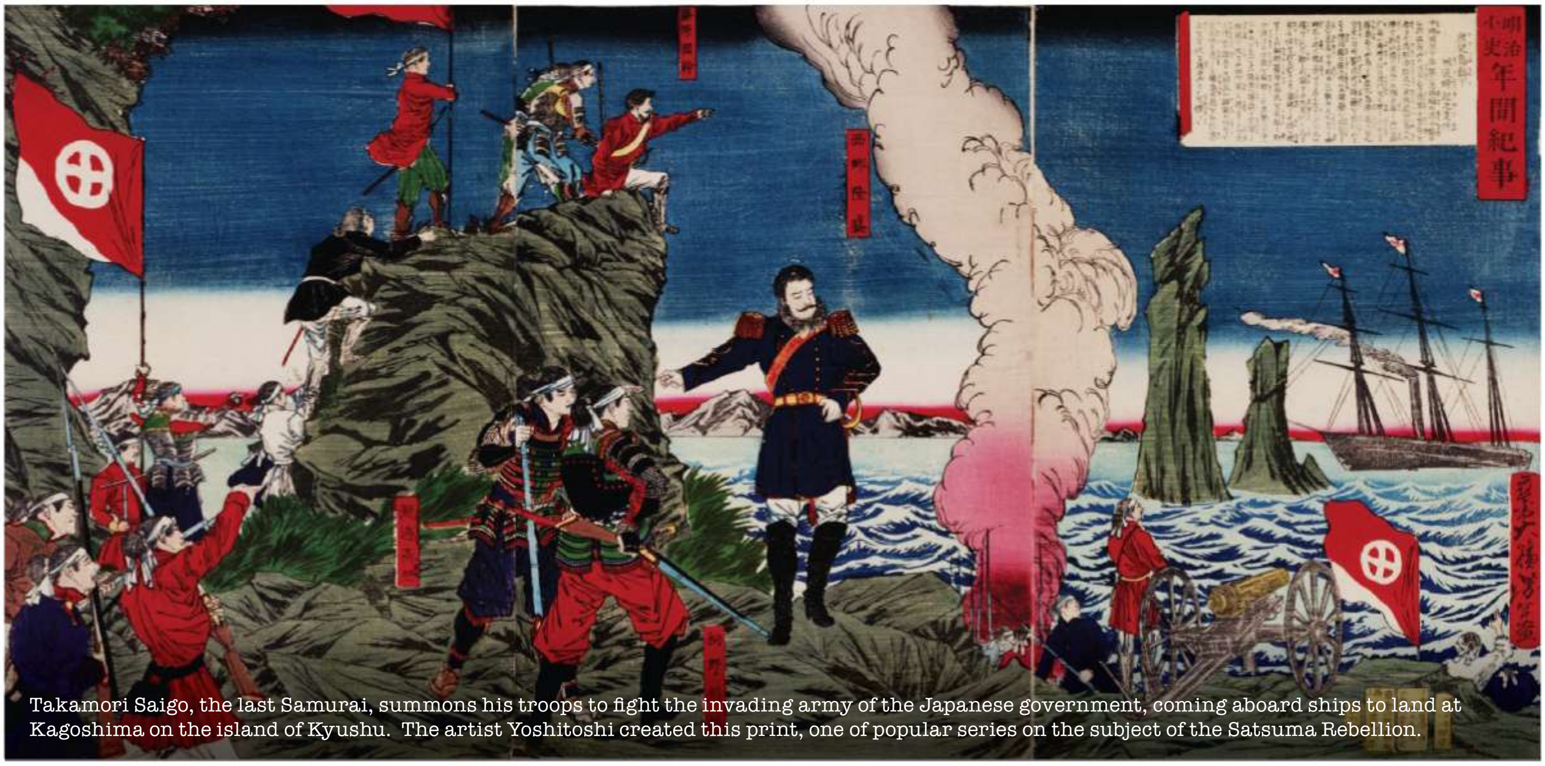
RUSSO-TURKISH WAR

DATES:	April 1877–March 1878
COMBATANTS:	Russia (with Rumanian and Serbian support) vs Ottoman Empire
FORCES ENGAGEDED:	Russia 240,000; Ottoman Empire 190,000
CASUALTIES:	Russia 47,000; Ottoman Empire 71,000
RESULT:	Russian victory



The long siege of Plevna began on 20 July 1877, when the Russian army attacked Ottoman positions. It only ended five months later with the Ottomans' capitulation.

Defeat of the last Samurai



Takamori Saigo, the last Samurai, summons his troops to fight the invading army of the Japanese government, coming aboard ships to land at Kagoshima on the island of Kyushu. The artist Yoshitoshi created this print, one of popular series on the subject of the Satsuma Rebellion.

A rebellion of traditionalist samurai in Japan has been crushed by the imperial government after the last remnant of the insurgent army was defeated at the Battle of Shiroyama on 24 September 1877 and the leader of the rebels, Takamori Saigo, committed suicide.

The rebellion broke out in the Satsuma region of Kagoshima province on the island of Kyushu, when government troops attempted to disarm the samurai in January 1877. Takamori had originally supported reforms, but turned against the government when he recognized their logical conclusion. He blundered early on when he preferred to lay siege to a government garrison instead of countering the concentration of the government army on Kyushu. In battle, the samurai were remarkably effective fighters, but they were badly outnumbered and did not have as many modern firearms.

IN BRIEF

- On 28 March 1873 the Netherlands declared war on Atjeh, an independent kingdom at the north-western tip of Sumatra. Six days earlier a military expedition had left Batavia to occupy the kingdom and bombarded the capital at Banda Aceh, although this achieved little before the expedition departed to avoid the coming monsoon. A second expedition, sent at the end of 1873, captured the Sultan of Atjeh's main stronghold in January 1874, but resistance continued as Atjehnese tribesmen conducted guerrilla war against the Dutch until 1908.
- The Carlist faction won two victories over their liberal opponents in a civil war in northern Spain. On 5 May 1873, they defeated liberal troops at Eraul and then on 9 July, they defeated another liberal force at Alpens in Catalonia.
- The defeat of a Carlist army at the Battle of Elgueta on 13 February 1876 seemed likely to condemn the Carlist movement to its third defeat in a history of rebellion against the Madrid government stretching back to the 1830s. Now that the Spanish monarchy had been restored under the liberal Alfonso XII, Carlism has lost its biggest aid to recruitment – opposition to a republican form of government.
- America's centennial celebrations have been marred by the news that on 25 June 1876 the 7th Cavalry Regiment, commanded by Civil War hero Major General George Armstrong Custer, was badly defeated by an alliance of Indians camped on the Little Bighorn river. Custer and some 200 men were massacred by a band possibly numbering as many as 15,000.
- A rebellious conservative army in the Colombian state of Antioquia was defeated by the pro-government forces in the state of Cauca at the Battle of Los Chancos on 31 August 1876. The brief rebellion, over secular education, ended in April 1877 with a treaty.

Wars against the American Indians

The million-man army mobilized by the Federal government in 1865 had been reduced to 55,000, just two years on, when its main mission was policing the frontier. Here, it was scattered across a vast area, virtually unsettled except for a few hardy pioneer farmers and miners. The spanning of the American West by railways, and the urge to find farmland in the West and on the Pacific Coast, brought conflict with the original inhabitants, the American Indians.

General George Crook was the most effective American general in the Indian Wars, but spent his last years denouncing the poor treatment of his opponents.

More Indians appeared on hills to the south and south-east of the soldiers' camp. Again they attacked; again the US troops deployed into a skirmish line and chased them off. The Battle of Wolf Mountain raged to and fro for five hours, with the Indians unusually fighting on foot on account of the terrain. In the end, the Indians had to withdraw as they were running low on ammunition and the soldiers were using cannons against them, to which they had no answer. Casualties, in the end, were surprisingly light: three Indians and two soldiers. The main result of the battle was a huge expenditure of ammunition by the Indians, who found it much harder to replace than the US soldiers.

This apparently minor engagement, some six months after the more notorious Battle of the Little Bighorn, where Major General George Armstrong Custer and part of his 7th Cavalry Regiment were massacred, is not only far more characteristic of the kind of warfare the US army waged against the American Indians, but was in many ways a more decisive battle. The commanders on both sides were among the most famous of all: the US soldiers were led by Colonel Nelson A. Miles and the Indians by Crazy Horse. Miles demonstrated that no matter what time of the year it was, the army would find bands of Indians who had wandered off the reservation. Many Indians already argued that they needed to make peace with the "bluecoats", whose successes of the previous autumn, together with a shortage of game during this particular winter had meant the roaming bands were finding life hard. In the spring, Crazy Horse surrendered, and in September 1877, while trying to escape arrest, he was killed. Miles, meanwhile, went on to a successful military career, which included the capture of another important Indian chief, Geronimo of the Apache.

Miles stood at the apex of the considerable experience the US army had acquired over many years of dealing with American Indians. In part thanks to being better supplied and able to fight in all seasons, the army eventually defeated every American Indian tribe that challenged the unequal treaties they were required to sign with the "white man". The contest began even in pre-Independence days, as American Indians resisted attempts by European settlers to take away land they viewed as a common resource, and not something that could be traded as if it were a flint or a bow and arrows.

The army's experience began with wars against the American Indians living in the Great Lakes area, including the worst defeat ever suffered against them, the St Clair debacle of November 1792. However, the overall approach to dealing with American Indians was largely established during these early conflicts. A military base would be established near to where the Indians lived. If the Indians violated any treaty, an expedition would be sent out to capture those responsible. Targeting the Indians' food resources and campaigning during seasons when the Indians needed to go hunting, or were tending crops, or faced a shortage of game, was generally advantageous in getting a quick end to any conflict. In a fight, technological superiority (at first firearms, later artillery) needed to be brought to bear as quickly as possible.

> "NO MATTER WHAT TIME OF THE YEAR IT WAS, THE ARMY WOULD FIND BANDS OF INDIANS WHO HAD WANDERED OFF THE RESERVATION"

A fort on an Indian agency in the American West shows the traditional structure of American frontier forts with blockhouses at the corners.

This all amounted to a war of small units scattered widely across a large area, which were often constantly on the move. If anything, it resembled police work more than military operations.

The wars against the Indians followed a particular pattern. Normally, they coincided with the establishment of some kind of white settlement in the area, which usually reduced the Indians' access to their hunting grounds or hampered the free movement of buffalo. In the case of the Custer massacre, the causes of the war began out of a wish on the part of the white man to mine gold in the Black Hills, a sacred area to the Sioux.

The Indians, by contrast, viewed war differently. The tribes of the plains had been fighting each other long before the white man arrived, and the main effect of whites on Indian warfare was to raise the level of technology as they acquired rifles, metal knives and hatchet blades.

For the Indians, war was an ad hoc affair, hardly different to hunting, except when large war parties gathered. They would travel in small groups and attack any enemy that they found. "Enemy" was an indiscriminate term, as anyone of the opposing tribe was an enemy, whether or not wearing a uniform, or holding a government commission. Men would be killed, unless made captive in which case they would be tortured for sport. Women of childbearing age were preferably taken prisoner, as were children, who were brought up in the tribe in order to increase its numbers. Women not of childbearing age were also likely to be killed, as were other women and children if the war party was not in a position to transport its captives back to a camp.

War parties were gathered together under the control of a war chief, who was not necessarily the same man as the chief of a band. The war chief was simply the acknowledged leader of the war party, and the choice depended on who was actually a member of the war party in question. However, when the tribe's council had agreed to a general war party, the head of the band was likely to be the war chief. The preferred tactic was the ambush, whether of a group on the move or of a group in camp, although the Indians were not above taunting their intended victims beforehand, as happened to Colonel Miles's men in the Battle of Butte. A volley or two of gunfire and arrows announced the ambush; this would be followed by a rush to close quarters, where it was hoped the Indians' skill at hand-to-hand fighting would prevail.

There were never very many Indians as a hunter-gatherer lifestyle cannot support a large population. They were therefore very reluctant to take casualties, and if too many warriors were lost it could mean the death of the tribe itself. Consequently, the ambush and hit-and-run tactics were almost forced on Indian leaders to minimize losses.

> “FOR THE INDIANS, WAR WAS AN AD HOC AFFAIR, HARDLY DIFFERENT TO HUNTING, EXCEPT WHEN LARGE WAR PARTIES GATHERED. THEY WOULD TRAVEL IN SMALL GROUPS AND ATTACK ANY ENEMY THAT THEY FOUND”

A photograph possibly showing Crazy Horse, a Lakota chief, who was one of the best commanders of the American Indians in all their wars against the United States. He helped defeat Major General George Custer's force at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on 25 June 1876.

The end of Zulu power

Members of the Natal Native Contingent, a force of African volunteers who were recruited to fight against the Zulus with British forces during the Zulu War.

The defeat of the Zulu army at Ulundi on 4 July 1879 forced the Zulu king, Cetewayo, to flee his own capital, bringing to an end the dynasty of Zulu kings founded by Shaka Zulu in 1828. The Zulu army has been shattered by the defeat, its regiments scattered across the countryside as warriors flee the battlefield.

The war began in January 1879 with the invasion of Zululand by three columns of British and colonial troops. One of the columns was surprised by a much larger Zulu force at Isandhlwana on 22 January and almost completely wiped out. However, the Zulu forces following the fleeing remnants of this force were in turn halted at Rorke's Drift, where 139 British soldiers beat off repeated assaults by around 4,000 Zulu warriors.

The decisive battle of the campaign took place in March, when the British offensive was renewed. One target of the British attack was a Zulu strongpoint at Hlobane, but the British failure there on 28 March had the unfortunate result for the Zulus of making them overconfident and they attacked a British camp nearby at Kambula the next day. Although they attacked for most of the day they were repeatedly driven off, suffering heavy casualties in the process.

The Zulu army was exceptionally well disciplined and highly skilled tactically, but the warriors were only equipped with short stabbing spears. The rifles and artillery of the British gave them such an advantage that even when the Zulus succeeded, as at Isandhlwana, it came at a high cost.

IN BRIEF

The surrender of Cuban rebels at the town of Zanjon on 10 February 1878 brought to an end to the Ten Years' War, a guerrilla conflict between Cuban nationalists and their Spanish overlords. The nationalists have received considerable support from their friends in the US, but no official diplomatic aid. Spain sent 25,000 troops to reinforce the garrison in order to suppress the rebellion.

Chile rules the waves

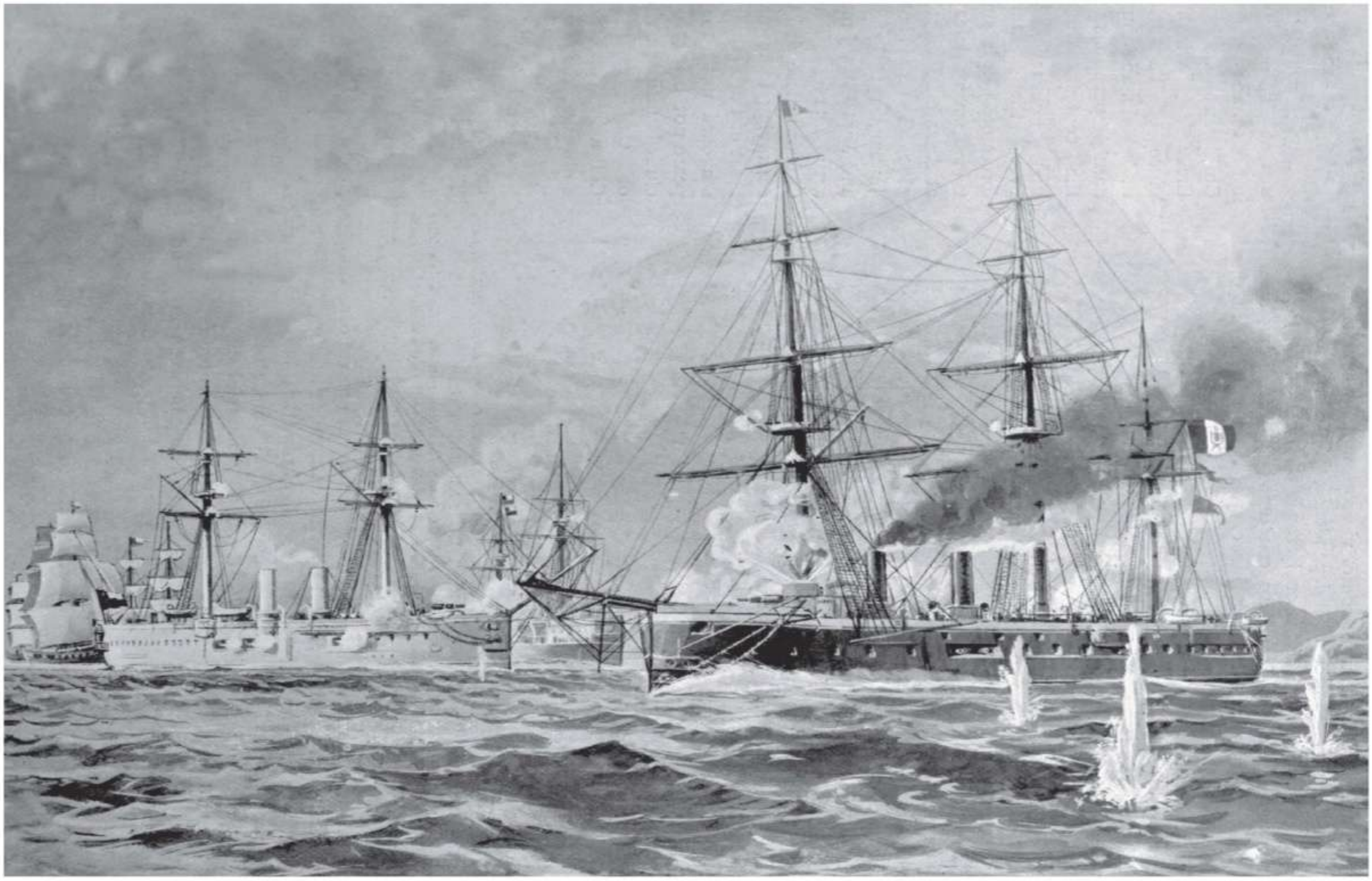
The Chilean fleet achieved a key naval victory at the Battle of Angamos in its war against the small Peruvian navy. On 8 October 1879, the Peruvian ironclad Huascar was captured after a long battle against three powerful Chilean vessels; her commander, Rear Admiral Miguel Grau, was killed. Chile now has complete command of the shipping lanes along the coast of the contested Atacama desert.

Chile's growing economic power in the Bolivian territory of Litoral, on the Pacific coast, led to a demand for increased taxes from Chilean companies operating in Bolivia. When these were not paid, the Bolivian government announced its intention to auction off the properties concerned. The taxes violated a treaty, so the Chilean government sent troops to occupy Antofagasta to prevent the auction on 14 February 1879, forcing Bolivia to declare war on Chile on 1 March. At this point, the contents of a secret treaty between Peru and Bolivia became public knowledge. Peru attempted to mediate in the crisis, but Chile rejected the offer and declared war on both Bolivia and Peru.

By this time, Chilean troops had already successfully occupied Calama, having defeated a small Bolivian army at Topáter on 23 March, but from this point the war shifted to a confrontation at sea. The roads along the coast of the Atacama Desert were poor so much of the resupply of troops there needed to be done by sea. The naval war was one of small actions, since neither Peru nor Chile had a large navy. The naval Battle of Iquique on 21 May pitted two Peruvian ironclads against two Chilean wooden ships, each side losing one ship, which had a greater effect on the Peruvian navy, since it was smaller. The surviving Peruvian ironclad, the Huascar, spent several months sailing up and down the coast looking for Chilean ships and cutting submarine telegraph cables, until her final battle on 8 October.

WAR OF THE PACIFIC

DATES:	1879–1884
COMBATANTS:	Chile vs Bolivia and Peru
FORCES ENGAGED:	Chile, c.30,000; Bolivia and Peru, c.36,000
CASUALTIES:	Chile, c.7,500; Bolivia and Peru, c.9,000
RESULT:	Chilean victory



The Peruvian ironclad Huáscar engages Chilean vessels during the battle of Angamos on 8 October 1879. The Huáscar was captured, outnumbered by six ships to one.

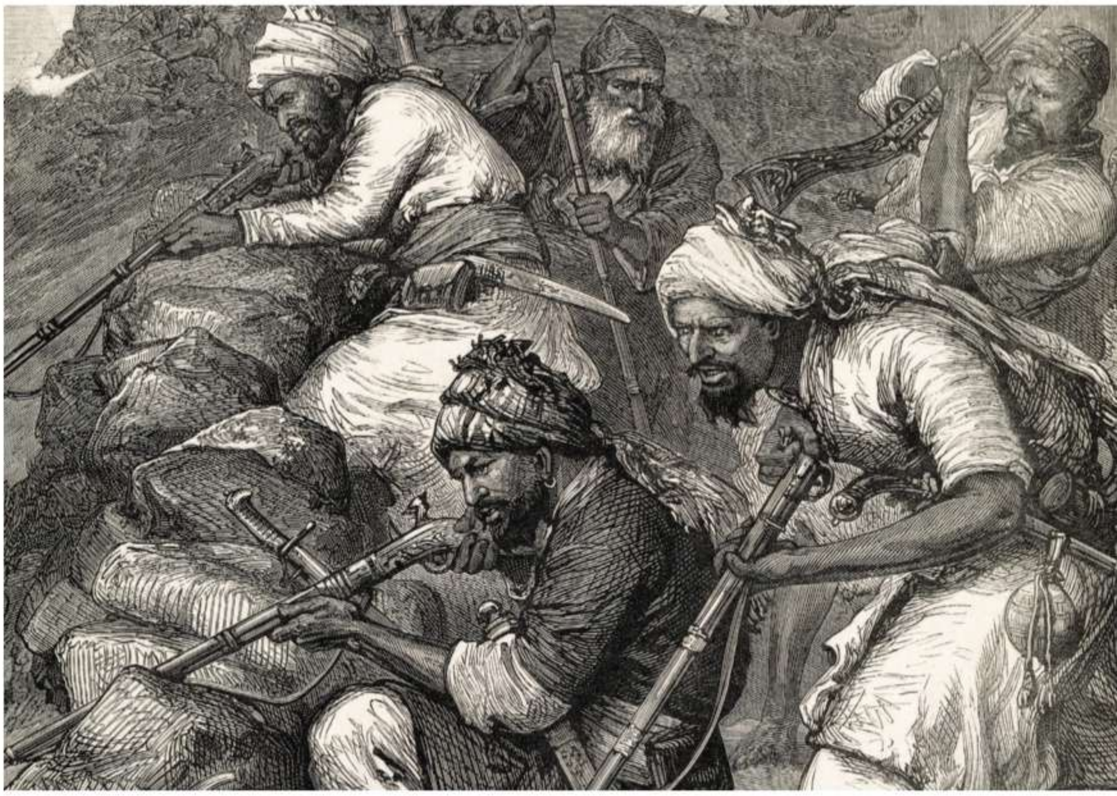
Afghan adventure proves costly

British troops occupying Afghanistan succeeded in with-standing a nationalist revolt there, having defeated an army led by Ayub Khan, a claimant to the emirate of that country, on 1 September 1880, at Kandahar. However, the British intend to withdraw rather than continue with a military occupation that has been expensive in both money and lives.

The British invasion of Afghanistan began in November 1878 as three columns rushed to cross the Hindu Kush before winter set in. They were successful at forcing their way over and reached Kabul, where a puppet ruler was put in place of the previous emir who fled to Mazr-i-Sharif, where he died. A treaty, signed in January 1879, gave the British considerable control over the country. However, in September the British resident and all his staff were assassinated at Kabul in an uprising as Afghan religious leaders proclaimed a holy war against the invaders. British troops occupied Kabul, but the unrest of its citizens eventually forced the commander, General Sir Frederick Roberts, to withdraw to his encampment at Sherpur.

For a time he was besieged there, but the Afghans could not capture the camp and Roberts eventually reoccupied Kabul, where he was sent reinforcements from the other main British base at Kandahar. Here the British put forward their own claimant to the emirate, Abdur Rahman. Ayub Khan's supporters defeated a British column at Maiwand before advancing on Kandahar, which they laid siege to. General Roberts, however, came to the aid of the garrison of Kandahar, and broke the siege.

> “A TREATY, SIGNED IN JANUARY 1879, GAVE THE BRITISH CONSIDERABLE CONTROL”



Afghan warriors sniping at British forces from the side of an Afghan mountain. They were good shots, but lacked artillery and the formal tactics sufficient to stand up to British forces.

Chilean army occupies Lima

Chilean troops entered the Peruvian capital of Lima after defeating the defenders at the Battle of Miraflores on 15 January 1881. The government has fled, vowing to continue the struggle.

Chile has achieved considerable success in this war. After rapidly occupying Bolivia's Litoral province, and securing command of the sea, an army was landed at the town of Pisagua in Peruvian territory on 2 November 1879. The Peruvians, with their Bolivian allies, attempted to drive the Chileans back, but suffered a significant defeat at the Battle of San Francisco on 19 November, when most of the Bolivian army deserted. A measure of revenge was achieved when the rallying Peruvians defeated a pursuing Chilean force in the Tarapacá valley on 27 November, but this did nothing to alter the course of the war. After a Chilean force landed at Pacocha Bay in February 1880, several months were spent securing control of the Peruvian provinces of Tacna and Arica. The final battle in these provinces occurred on 26 May when a Chilean army completely overwhelmed the main allied force at the Battle of Tacna, with the town of Arica being secured after an assault on 7 June.

> “AFTER RAPIDLY OCCUPYING BOLIVIA'S LITORAL PROVINCE, AND SECURING COMMAND OF THE SEA, AN ARMY WAS LANDED AT THE TOWN OF PISAGUA IN PERUVIAN TERRITORY ON 2 NOVEMBER 1879”

After diplomacy had failed to achieve an end to the war, the Chileans decided to seize Lima; troops were landed at Pisco on 20 November 1880 and advanced north. The Peruvians constructed a line of trenches based on the town of San Juan, but these entrenchments were successfully carried by a Chilean attack on 13 January 1881 and the Peruvians withdrew to the Miraflores line, the last defence before the capital itself.

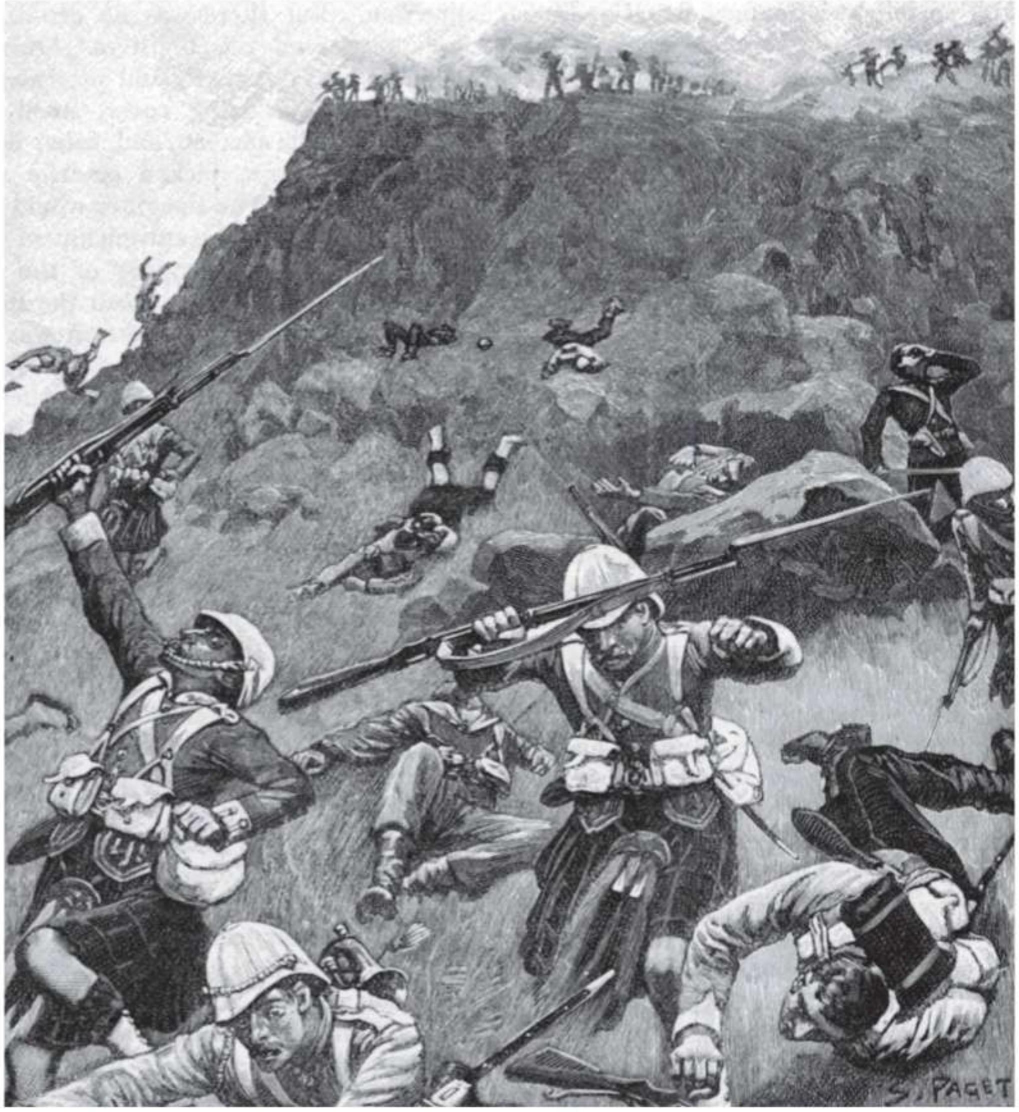
Boers beat British

A Boer force only 500 strong defeated a similar sized British force at the Battle of Majuba Hill on 27 February 1881. The victory will secure the independence of the Afrikaners (Boers) of the Transvaal Republic (also known as the South African Republic). From the beginning of the war in December 1880, the British suffered setbacks at the hands of the Boers, with all their garrisons in the country under siege. On 28 January 1881, the British attempted an assault on a Boer position at Laing's Nek, a pass that led from Natal on the coast into the Transvaal, but the Boers fended off the attacks.

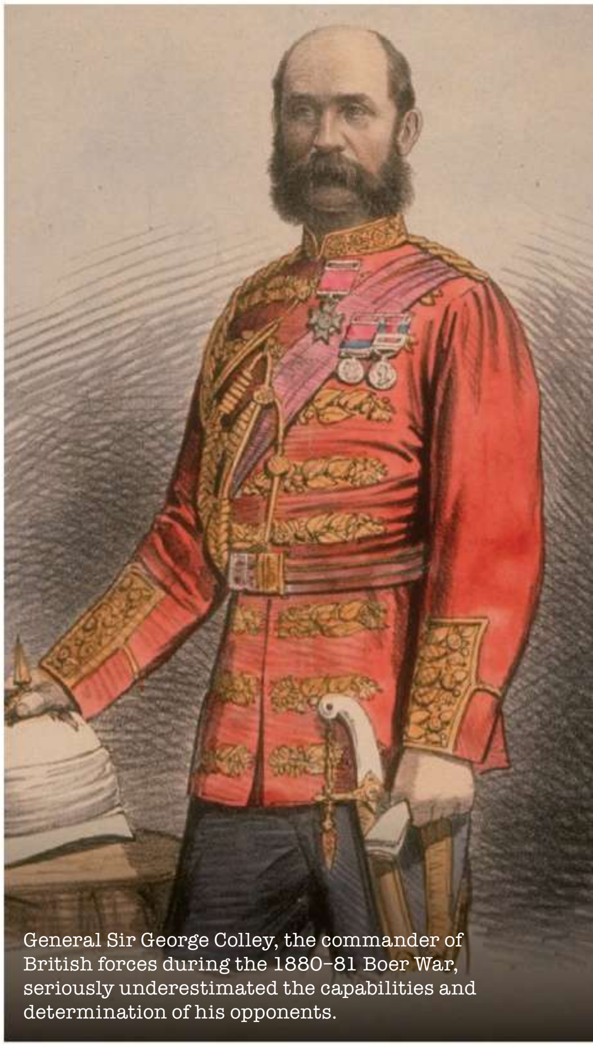
The British, under General Sir George Colley, retreated back to their Natal colony, but once reinforced he chose to make another attempt to enter Transvaal before his replacement, General Sir Frederick Roberts, could arrive with further reinforcements.

Colley moved back toward Laing's Nek, this time taking part of his force to a position on Majuba Hill overlooking a Boer camp. When morning came, the Boers, initially apprehensive, were surprised when Colley did nothing with his advantage so they advanced up the hill, keeping the British under fire.

On reaching the summit they were able to occupy higher ground than the British and eventually routed them. Colley was killed in the action.



British troops flee down Majuba Hill after defeat at the hands of Boer forces, 28 January 1881. The British neglected to take proper precautions in securing high ground around their camp.



General Sir George Colley, the commander of British forces during the 1880–81 Boer War, seriously underestimated the capabilities and determination of his opponents.

IN BRIEF

- A bloody but brief civil war in Argentina in June 1880 ended with victory for the government forces of the president, Nicolas Avellaneda, after the battles of Los Corrales on 17 June, Puente Barracas on 20 June and Puente Alsina on 21 June. The government of Buenos Aires province, under Carlos Tejedor, had sought to reject Avellaneda's authority and possibly even secede from Argentina altogether.
- Basuto guerrillas defeated a British cavalry column at Qalabani in October 1880. The victory preserved Basuto self-government, a rare example of an African military victory in the field ultimately leading to political success.

British hero killed in Khartoum

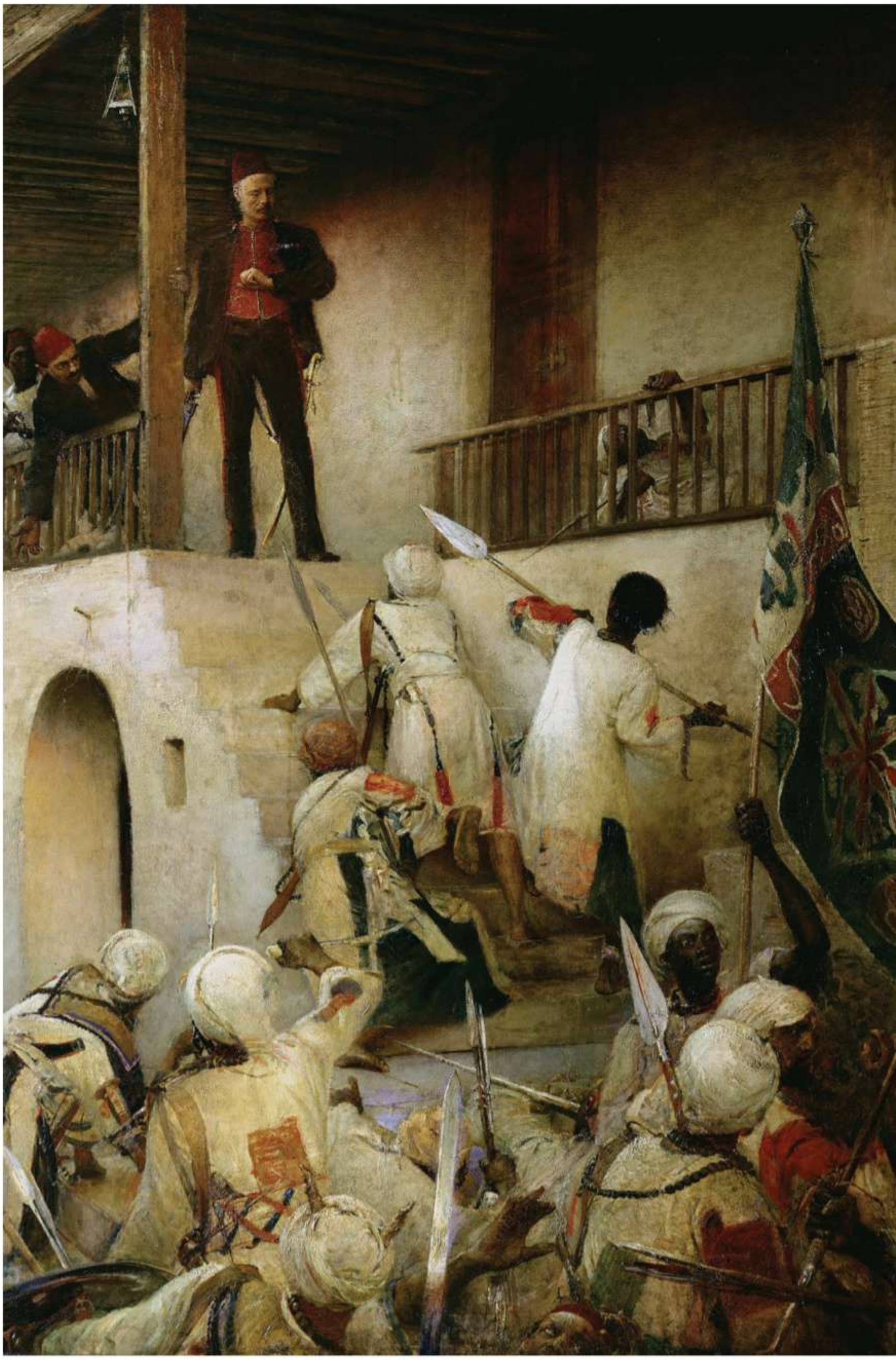
A British general was killed and Islamist nationalists seized power in the Sudan, after Khartoum was successfully assaulted by a rebel army on 26 January 1885. The rebellion was led by a religious leader who called himself the Mahdi, believing himself to be the Prophet Mohammed's expected successor.

The Mahdi's rebellion began in 1881 when he raised an army to secure the independence of Sudan from its Egyptian suzerain. He took a small army to Kordofan in the centre of Sudan where he gathered further recruits. The Egyptian government selected a former Indian Army officer, General William Hicks, to take command of military operations, but he and almost all his army were massacred at the Battle of El Obeid on 3 November 1883.

The British government, which effectively controlled Egypt, now insisted on the abandonment of the Sudan and sent General Charles Gordon to organize the evacuation of Khartoum. Gordon arrived in Khartoum in February 1884, but concluded that there was no possibility of safely evacuating the city with the troops at his disposal, and began organizing its defence instead, hoping that either the British or the Egyptians would send reinforcements to help.

Public pressure in Britain forced the government to act in August and General Sir Garnet began organizing a column to advance to the relief of Khartoum. While the main force laboured up the Nile, a brigade of camel-borne troops was sent on ahead at the beginning of January 1885. The Mahdi in turn sent a force to at least slow down their advance and battles were fought on 17 January at Abu Klea and on 19 January at Gubat. Leading elements of the relieving column only reached Khartoum on 28 January 1885, two days after the city's fall.

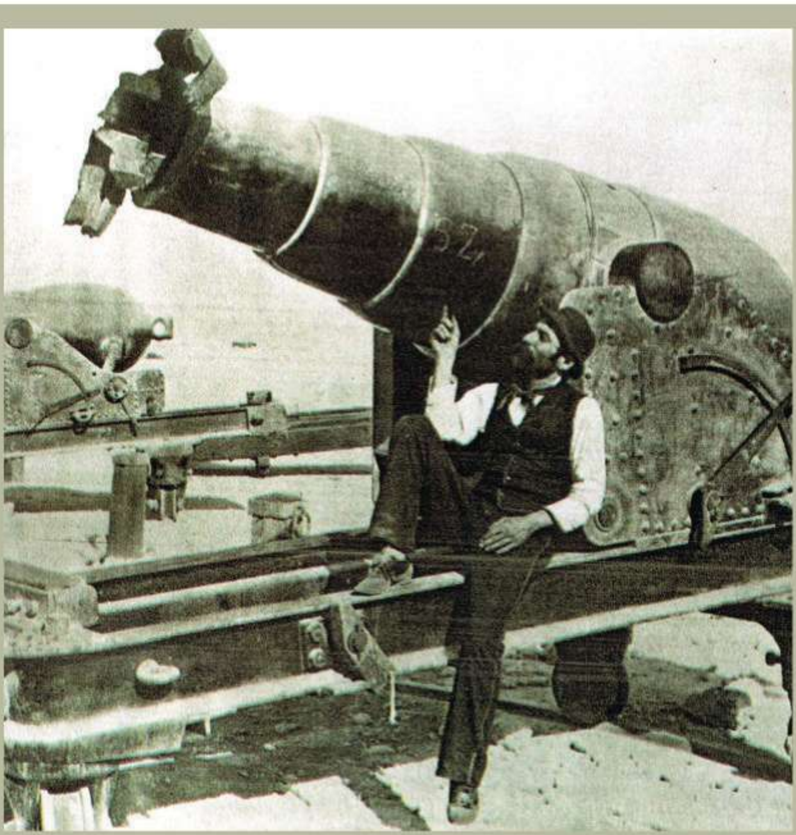
“THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT SELECTED A FORMER INDIAN ARMY OFFICER, TO TAKE COMMAND OF MILITARY OPERATIONS, BUT HE AND ALMOST ALL HIS ARMY WERE MASSACRED AT THE BATTLE OF EL OBEID”



General Charles Gordon stands on the steps of the Governor-General's mansion in Khartoum, after the successful assault by the Mahdi's army on the town's defences.

IN BRIEF

- A British army defeated the Egyptians at Tel-el-Kebir on 13 September 1882 after a night march across the desert in an attempt to hide their plan from the Egyptians. A British fleet had already bombarded Alexandria on 11 July. The victory will enable the British to take control of Egypt, after a crisis provoked by the nationalist policies of Colonel Ahmed Urabi.
- A French naval officer, Captain Henri Riviere, was captured and killed at Halong Bay, Tonkin, on 19 May 1883, by the Black Flag army (Chinese Taiping rebels who had become mercenaries serving the Vietnamese emperor). Riviere had been sent to Vietnam to halt the depredations of Black Flag pirates and seized the citadel of Hanoi on 25 April 1882.
- The Chilean victory over Peruvian resistance at the Battle of Huamachuco marks the defeat of the last effective opposition to the Chilean occupation of the country on 10 July 1883. With a Peruvian government determined on peace, it seems only a matter of time before a treaty is agreed.



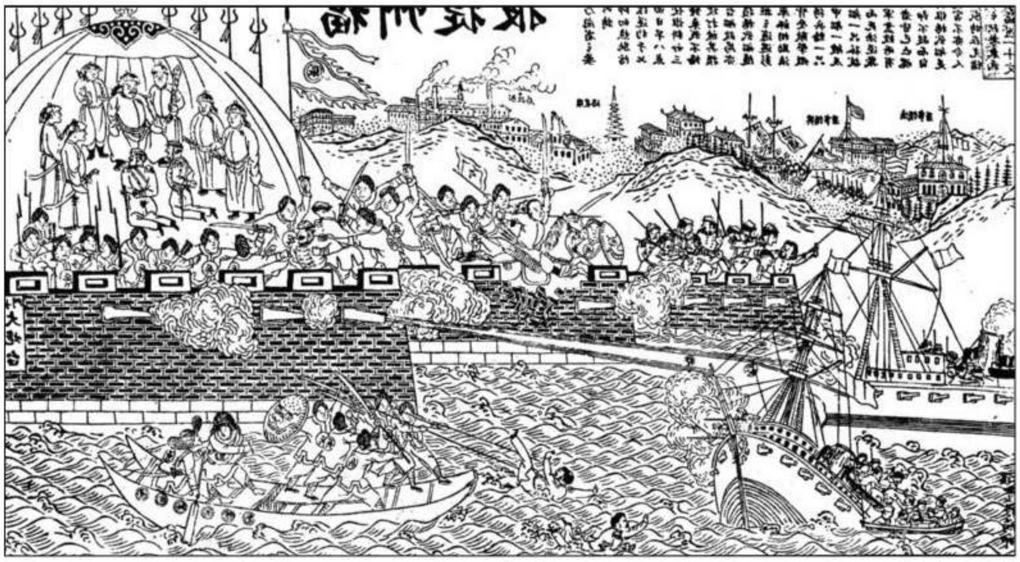
The burst barrel of an Egyptian gun after the bombardment of Alexandria in July 1882 by a British fleet.

French abandon Lang Son, keep Annam

A French expeditionary force on the border between China and Tonkin abandoned its position at Lang Son on 28 March 1885, but may have achieved enough to secure French possession of Vietnam.

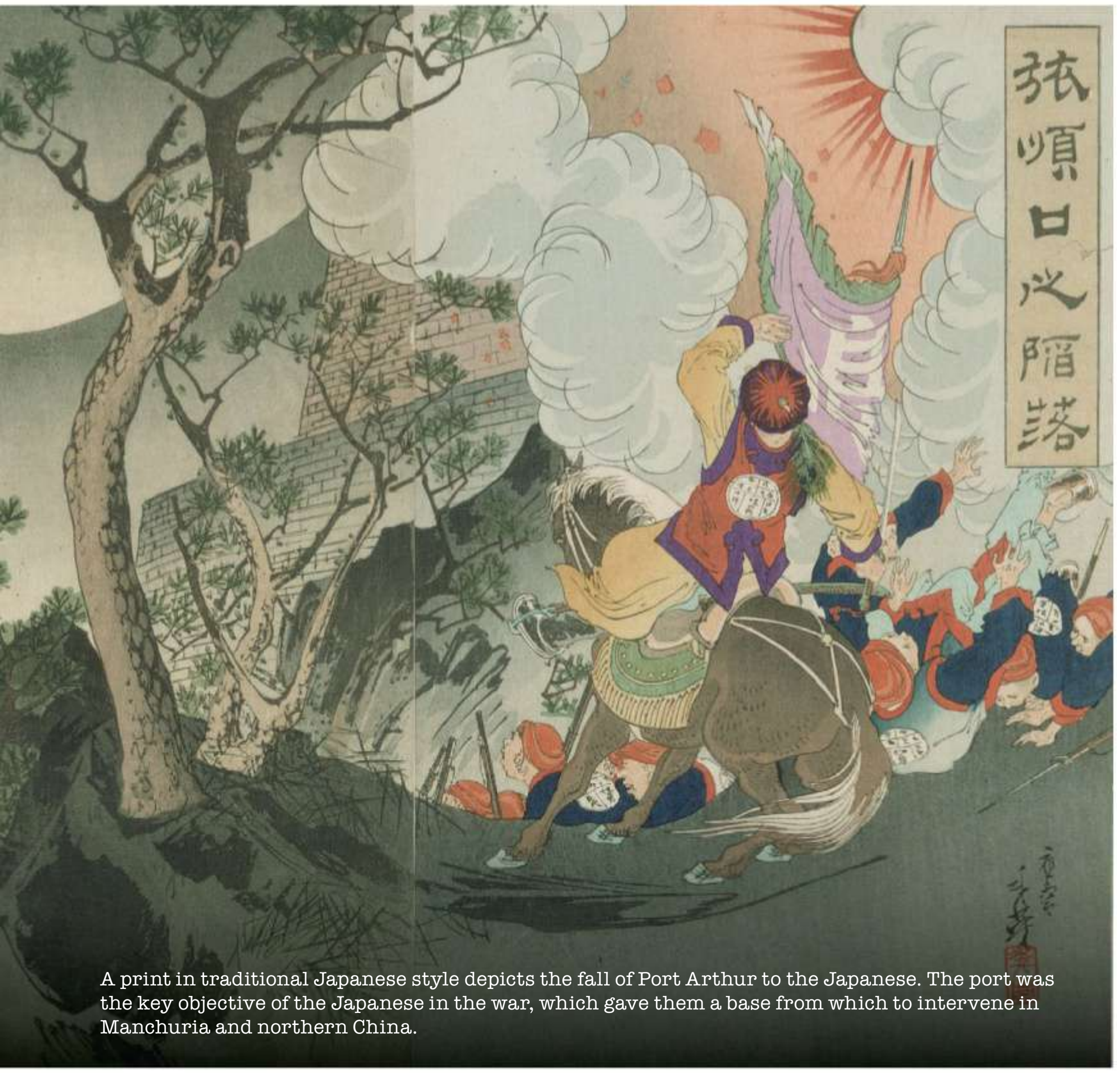
After the death of Captain Henri Riviere in the spring of 1883, the French government sent a larger military force to Vietnam in order to extend French control north from Cochin China through Annam and into Tonkin. A French fleet bombarded the Vietnamese capital of Hue in August 1883. The emperor was notionally a vassal of the Chinese and China objected to the annexation of Vietnam to the French empire. Although the Chinese signed treaties acknowledging the fact, they later objected to the French moving troops into their new conquest. War broke out and the French navy sank the Fukien squadron of the Chinese fleet at Foochow on 23 August 1884. The French also blockaded Taiwan.

However, the main battlefield was in Tonkin where a battalion of the French Foreign Legion was besieged at Tuyen Quang for nearly three months. These men were eventually relieved by the expeditionary force that reached Lang Son and then pressed on for Tuyen Quang. On 23 March 1885, this column engaged 10,000 Chinese troops in the Battle of Zhennan Pass on the border between Tonkin and China. Heavily outnumbered, and having shot off most of their ammunition, the French had to retreat after a two-day battle.



A Chinese woodcut claims the victory of their forces over the French during the battle of Foochow on 23 August 1884. In fact, the French wiped out half the Chinese fleet.

Japan seizes Korea



A print in traditional Japanese style depicts the fall of Port Arthur to the Japanese. The port was the key objective of the Japanese in the war, which gave them a base from which to intervene in Manchuria and northern China.

The Japanese defeated the last major Chinese army attempting to contest the invasion of Korea at Tienchuangtai in Manchuria on 6 March 1895. With the destruction of this army, along with the Chinese North Ocean Fleet at Weihaiwei, the war – which began because of Japanese anger at the dispatch of Chinese troops to resolve a political problem in Korea – is now effectively over.

The Japanese opened the war with what would become their traditional method of surprise attack. When a Japanese squadron encountered a Chinese steamer, escorted by two small warships, on 25 July 1894, the Japanese sank the steamer, which was carrying troops to Korea, and one of the warships, and machine-gunned the survivors in the water. War was declared only seven days later, on 1 August.

With both sides having rushed armies to Korea in support of their respective political allies, the main campaigns of the war were fought there and in Manchuria. The two armies clashed in Pyongyang on 15 September, when the Japanese launched a night assault on the walls of the city, which was occupied by the Chinese.

The Chinese were driven out of the city, leaving the Japanese in control of Pyongyang, in addition to Pusan, Chemulpo and Seoul, which they had already occupied.

After the defeat of the Chinese fleet at the Battle of the Yalu River on 17 September, the Japanese gained command of the seas. They landed troops on the Liaotung peninsula in October and these forces occupied Port Arthur (Lüshun) on 21 November, massacring most of the city's Chinese residents.

The Japanese then moved against the Chinese naval base of Weihaiwei which they captured on 12 February 1895 after a 23-day siege in harsh winter weather.

Chile's president overthrown in civil war

The armed forces supporting the Chilean president, José Manuel Balmaceda, were defeated by supporters of the Chilean congress in the Battle of Placilla on 28 August 1891. The president had begun the year attempting to rule without the agreement of Congress to a budget, resulting in an act of deposition being passed against him on 6 January 1891.

Most of the navy gave its wholehearted support to Congress, while the army's sentiments were more divided. The navy withdrew most of its ships, together with the congressmen, to Iquique in the north of the country. The Congressionalist victory over the "Gobernistas" at Pozo Almonte on 7 March secured the northern part of the country as a base for Congress's military forces.

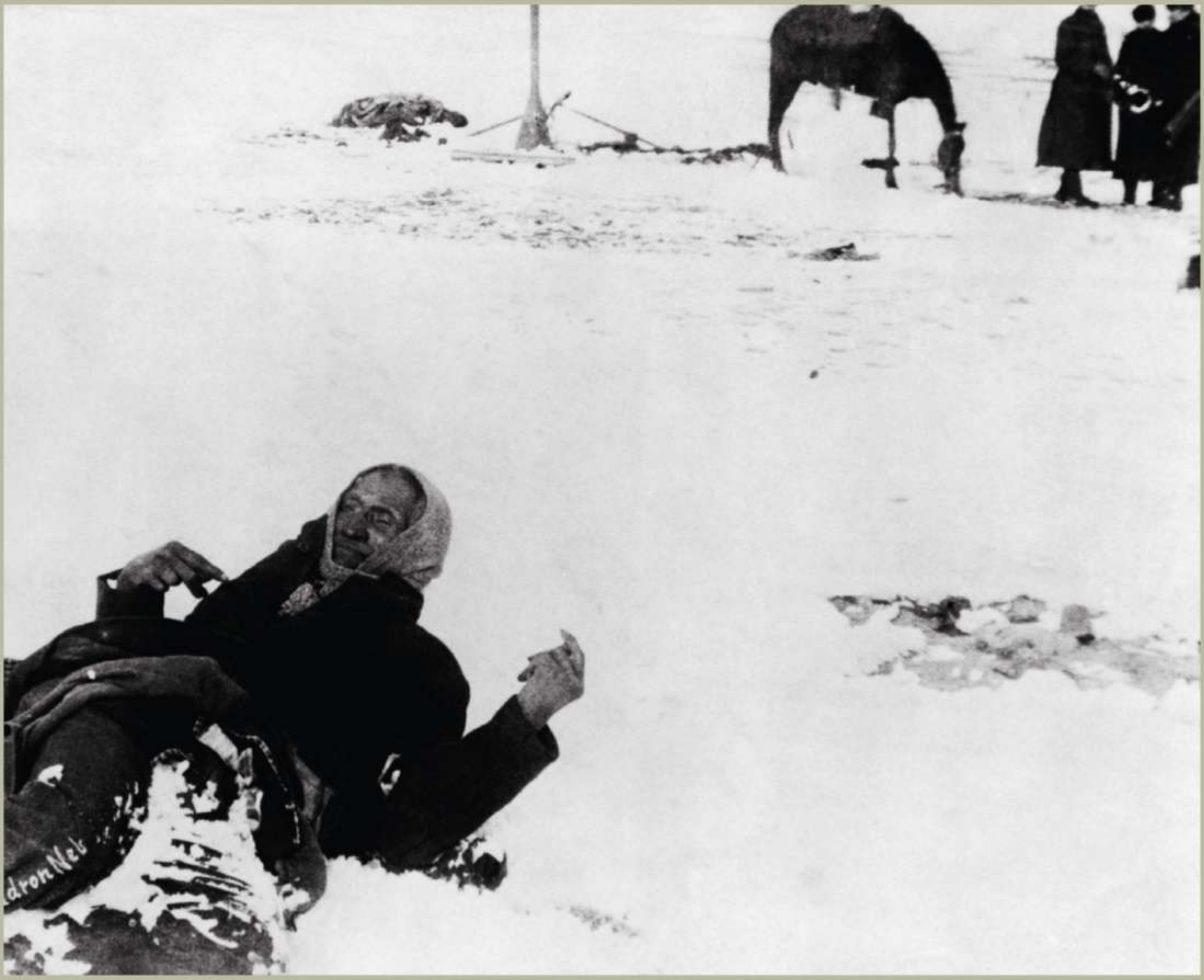
President Balmaceda sent the only ships he controlled, two torpedo gunboats, to attack the Congressionalist fleet in the north. On 23 April, these attacked the ships in Caldera Bay and sank one old ironclad with a self-propelled torpedo, the first such sinking in naval history.

The Congressionalists were better able to get military supplies and in August succeeded in transporting a strong force to Valparaíso. Landing north of this port on 10 August, the Congressionalist army beat the defending Gobernista force at Concon. The Battle of Placilla has given them control of Valparaíso; it was now only a matter of time before they occupied the capital, Santiago, and toppled President Balmaceda.

"ON 23 APRIL, THESE ATTACKED THE SHIPS IN CALDERA BAY AND SANK ONE OLD IRONCLAD WITH A SELF-PROPELLED TORPEDO, THE FIRST SUCH SINKING IN NAVAL HISTORY"

IN BRIEF

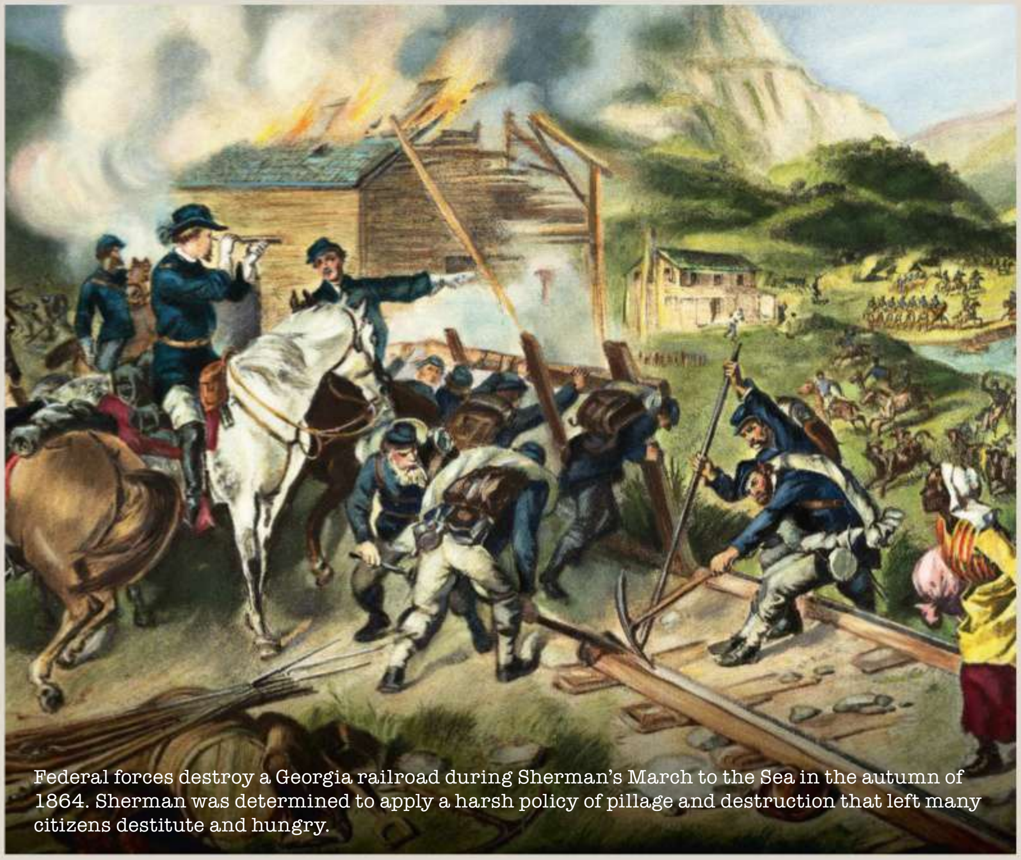
- Some 150 Sioux Indians and 25 American cavalry troopers were killed in a shoot-out at Wounded Knee, Dakota Territory, in the United States, on 29 December 1890. The shooting began as cavalrymen were searching for weapons among the Indians, who were about to be transported to Omaha, Nebraska, and were therefore thought of as prisoners. According to the army, the Indians opened fire on the troopers, before in turn they were fired at by the cavalry.
- A column of armed volunteers in the employ of the British South Africa Company invaded Matabeleland in southern Africa and defeated the Ndebele army in two battles on 25 October 1893 and 1 November 1893. In both cases, the artillery and machine guns of the volunteers cut down many of the Ndebele, who were already weakened by an outbreak of smallpox. Matabeleland has been occupied by these whites and much of the land divided up among them.
- A revolution broke out in Cuba after 23 February 1895, as Cuban nationalists raised the standard of rebellion when Spain suspended constitutional guarantees in Cuba. The Spanish had some foreknowledge of the event and managed to defeat a number of uprisings in the west of the island, around Havana, but the rebels are waging guerrilla war from bases in the east, with support from exiles in the United States.



The body of Big Foot, Lakota chief, after his death at Wounded Knee, 29 December 1890. The exact circumstances that led to American soldiers opening fire on the Indians remain disputed.

The war against civilians

On 21 October 1896, General Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau, the commander of the Spanish forces in Cuba, opposed by Cuban nationalists involved in guerrilla warfare, instituted a new policy to help him win the war. "All the inhabitants of the country now outside the line of fortifications of the towns, shall within the period of eight days concentrate themselves in the town so occupied by the troops." The policy went under the name reconcentrado, which has passed into the English language as the term "concentration camps". The aim of this procedure was to keep the war as short as possible, albeit at the cost of dramatically increased hardship for those in the war zone.



Federal forces destroy a Georgia railroad during Sherman's March to the Sea in the autumn of 1864. Sherman was determined to apply a harsh policy of pillage and destruction that left many citizens destitute and hungry.

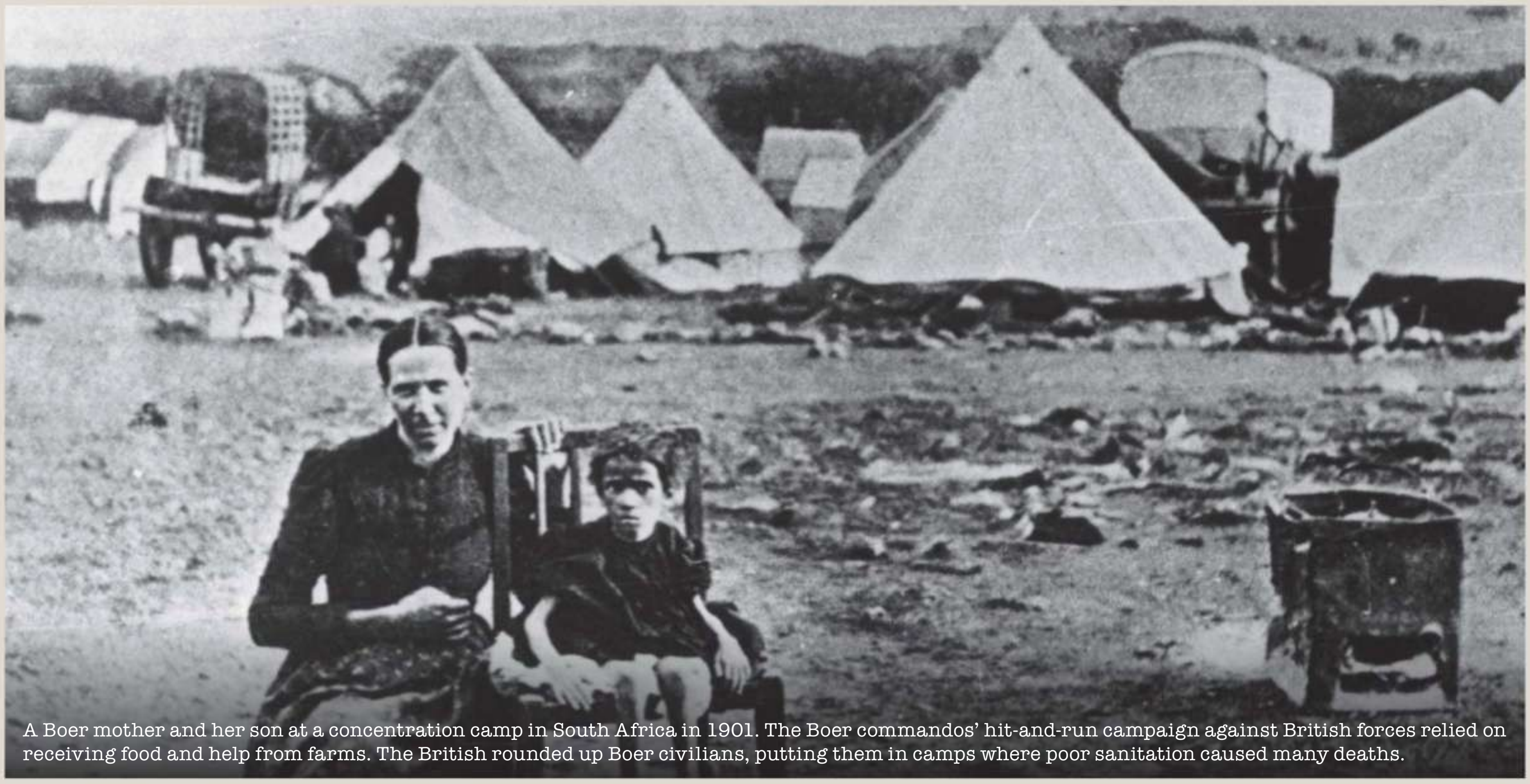
Weyler required all civilians in the countryside to relocate from their homes and move into the fortified localities constructed by the Spanish, together with any farm animals, food reserves or anything else that Weyler believed might help to sustain the guerrillas in their fight against the Spanish. Those who remained outside the new camps after eight days would be treated as guerrillas and shot.

As a way of solving Weyler's problem, the idea no doubt seemed reasonable – the camps were not intended to be prisons, and people were intended to be properly fed and housed by the army. After a year or two, the war would probably be won and they could go home again. However, from the point of view of those being moved, it seemed very different. They were being taken from their homes and put in a camp where they would be subject to a degree of military discipline, which meant they would not necessarily be free to come and go as they pleased. Furthermore, their homes and land were likely to be destroyed or damaged in order to deny them to the guerrillas. In practice, the camps were far removed from Weyler's idea of civilized, if inconvenient, temporary accommodation. The officers and men of the Spanish army had enough to do, simply ensuring they had food, were in reasonable health and not the easy targets of Cuban guerrillas, let alone look after a large number of civilians whose sympathies lay more with the guerrillas than with Spain. Consequently, the reconcentrados were not well run, and soon disease and hunger were commonplace. Shanty towns emerged within the fortified areas. In these circumstances, the vulnerable – the very young, the very old and those already in poor health – were soon dying in large numbers, even in the streets, giving further cause for resentment by the resettled inhabitants. Perhaps as many as 200,000 Cubans died because of this policy.

Making war on civilians was nothing new in military historical terms. As recently as thirty years earlier, Federal soldiers invading the southern states had devastated parts of Virginia and Georgia specifically to deny the resources of those areas to the enemy. In addition to that, the encouragement of slaves to desert to Federal lines had a considerable impact on the plantation economy of the South, by denying them their source of labour. There are also earlier examples of armies such as Napoleon's living off the land, which effectively meant taking whatever they wanted from the people it belonged to. Sometimes the military paid for what they took – normally if it was in their own territory or land they wished to subsequently occupy – but this was not common. In the medieval era, pillaging and destroying villages was standard practice – such as the Sack of Limoges in 1370 – as it demonstrated the local overlord was incapable of offering the protection to his people that was implicit in the feudal contract.

However, with his Cuban experiment, Weyler was the first to regard civilians as a legitimate target of war. The whole implication of his policy was that his army

> "THEY WERE BEING TAKEN FROM THEIR HOMES AND PUT IN A CAMP WHERE THEY WOULD BE SUBJECT TO A DEGREE OF MILITARY DISCIPLINE"



A Boer mother and her son at a concentration camp in South Africa in 1901. The Boer commandos' hit-and-run campaign against British forces relied on receiving food and help from farms. The British rounded up Boer civilians, putting them in camps where poor sanitation caused many deaths.

was in a hostile country, and as the occupying army had the right to subject enemy civilians to a form of martial law. This ceased to be an implication and became an established fact in the incidents of this kind that followed in southern Africa and the Philippines.

The British rounded up Boer families and placed them in what they called "concentration camps", while burning down their homes and often shooting farm livestock. Nutrition and hygiene in these camps were very poor, and many women and children died, which led to lasting bitterness on the part of the Afrikaners (as they were later called). However, the policy did work in the end as the Boers conceded defeat in part because they had nowhere to draw supplies from.

A similar policy was instituted on 7 December 1901 by American general J. Franklin Bell, in the Philippines. Here, however, having burned down the villages, alternative accommodation for those who had lived there was not always provided.

The concentration camp and scorched-earth policy in the end reached its logical conclusion in the Second World War with the introduction of strategic bombing as a tactic, and massacres of civilians as part of reprisals. Although notionally the civilian was not the target of these attacks, the limitations of targeting technology condemned those who lived in the wrong neighbourhood to being the target of a cascade of bombs from hundreds of aircraft. By the time the V-1s and V-2s were launched in 1944-45, a city became an indiscriminate target. Modern precision munitions have had the dubious effect of both making it less likely that civilians are targeted directly, while still subjecting them to the health risks of losing electrical power or clean water, as was done by coalition forces attacks on Iraq in both 1991 and 2003. In a sense, these acts demonstrated to the people the fact that their overlord could no longer protect them – not so far removed from the Black Prince's sacking of Limoges in 1370.

French civilians were victims of the Germans on three occasions in a hundred years – during the Franco-Prussian War, during the First World War, and during the Second World War.

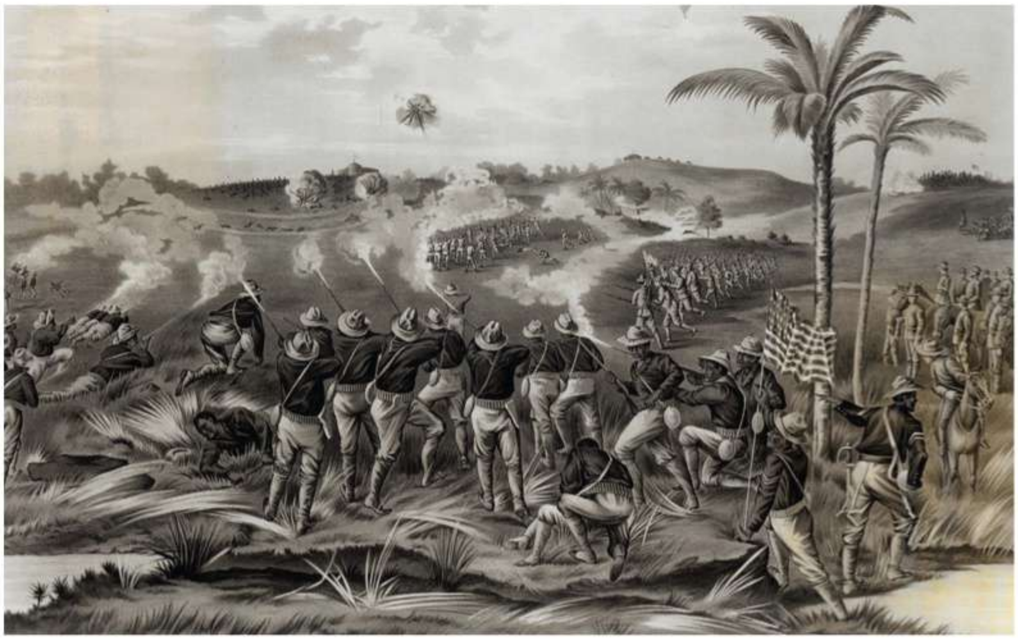
America conquers a Spanish empire

The United States emerged victorious on all fronts war against Spain declared on 25 April 1898, fought largely among Spanish colonial possessions and concluded by the fall of Manila on 13 August 1898.

The war broke out after the destruction of the USS Maine, an American battleship, which exploded in Havana harbour on 15 February 1898. At the time, the Americans believed that the ship had been destroyed by Spanish sabotage. The American public was also sympathetic with the Cuban rebels and the American decision to send troops to Cuba was very popular. The Spanish objected to this interference in their imperial affairs and broke off diplomatic relations on 20 April, leading to war.

Cuba was invaded on 22 June and after a short siege the Americans captured Santiago on 17 July. Although the Spanish squadron based there had attempted to escape the blockading American fleet, it was destroyed in a naval battle on 3 July.

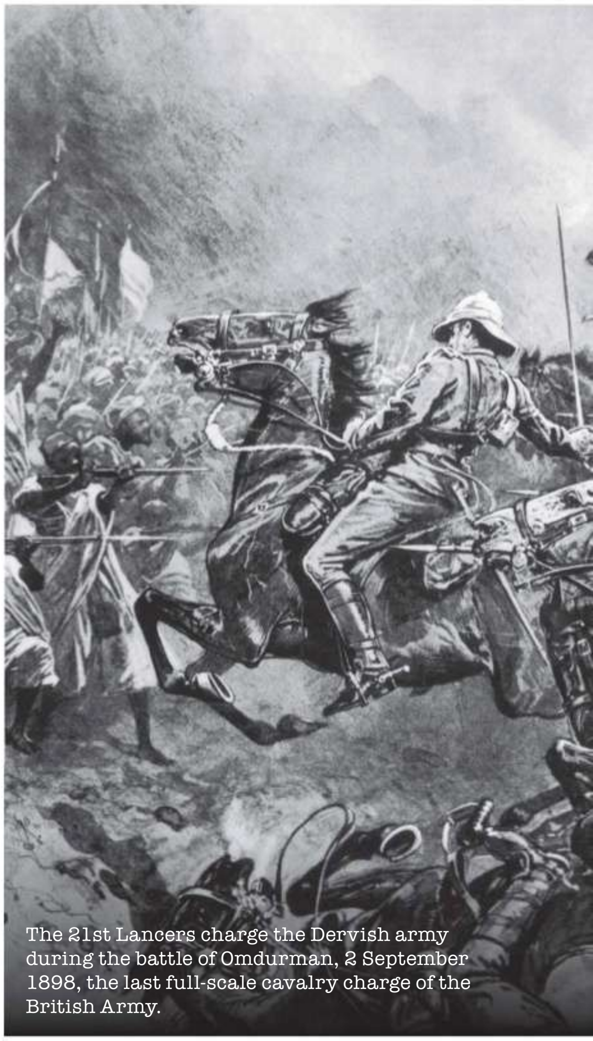
Eight days after Santiago fell, a force landed on Puerto Rico and in four days had managed to secure the island. At the same time American forces landed in the Philippines, having left California in May and June. Philippine nationalists had been fighting the Spanish colonial forces since American Commodore George Dewey had sunk the Spanish Asiatic Squadron in the Battle of Manila Bay on 1 May 1898. On the arrival of American troops, the city of Manila was placed under siege and the first assault was made on 13 August, although a peace protocol had been signed the day before.



A view from the American lines of the assault on San Juan Hill, the heights that overlooked the Cuban town of Santiago on 1 July 1898, during the Spanish–American War.

SPANISH–AMERICAN WAR

DATES:	April-August 1898
COMBATANTS:	Spain vs United States of America
FORCES ENGAGED:	Spain, 43,000; United States, 40,000
CASUALTIES:	Spain, c.7,500; United States, 2,446 combat deaths
RESULT:	US victory



The 21st Lancers charge the Dervish army during the battle of Omdurman, 2 September 1898, the last full-scale cavalry charge of the British Army.

Britain conquers Sudan

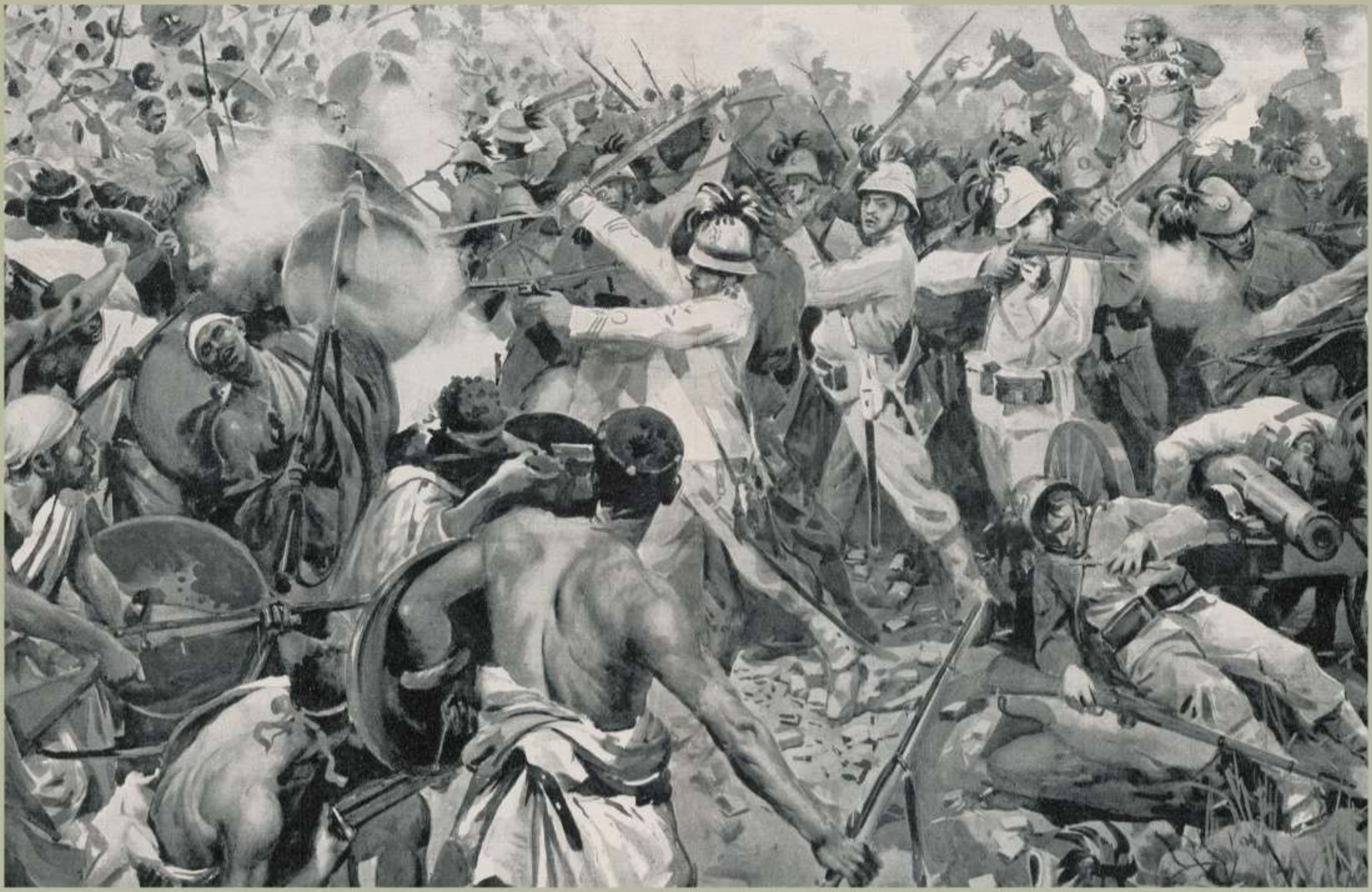
On 2 September 1898, a British force, equipped with machine guns and artillery, decisively defeated a large force of Sudanese warriors who were equipped with spears and muskets near the town of Omdurman.

Sudan had effectively had independence from imperial rule since 1885 when it achieved its liberation from Egypt, which had ruled the region since 1820.

The British began their campaign to reoccupy the Sudan on behalf of Egypt in 1896 when they took control of Dogala province. Supported by Egyptian troops, the British continued a steady but very slow advance southward, delayed by the need to construct a railway line across the Egyptian desert to help supply the troops.

IN BRIEF

- The Italian army suffered a crushing blow at the Battle of Adowa on 1 March 1896. The Italians were badly outnumbered by their Ethiopian opponents and were caught on the march so they could not bring their considerably superior firepower to bear effectively. Half the Italian army was killed or captured, while the Ethiopians lost even more heavily. The Italian attempt at conquering Ethiopia has been abandoned.
- An attempt to provoke an uprising of foreign workers in the Transvaal Republic over the New Year holiday of 1896 has failed. A group of armed volunteers from Matabeleland under the command of the administrator-general of Matabeleland, the British official Leander Starr Jameson, crossed the border into the South African Republic on 29 December 1895. At Krugersdorp, on 1 January 1896, the raiders encountered stiff resistance and changed their route before surrendering to a large Boer force at Doornkop on 2 January 1896. The Boers suspect the involvement of the British government in the raid.
- On 5 August 1896, a small army of British volunteers attacked a Ndebele army in the Matopo hills of Matabeleland, driving them out of the positions they had occupied overlooking the Tuli Road. In March, the Ndebele had rebelled against their recently arrived British conquerors, together with the neighbouring Shona people. The far more numerous Ndebele and Shona could not defeat the modern weapons of the white settlers, however, and the rebellion was largely over by the autumn.
- The withdrawal of a Greek army from Epirus on 15 May 1897 brought to an end a disastrous war against the Ottoman Empire. The Greeks attempted to take advantage of a rebellion in Crete at the end of 1896 by fomenting a similar uprising in Macedonia in March 1897. However, the stronger Ottomans benefited from the lack of discipline in the Greek army and defeated it at Mati in April, capturing the town of Larissa, while driving the Greeks to Pharsala. Both the Greeks and the Ottomans attempted to invade one another's territory in Epirus, but neither side was successful.



The Italian soldiers' last stand at the Battle of Adowa, 1 March 1896. The Italian army was caught on the march, and overwhelmed by a far larger enemy in a rare native victory in a war against an imperialist power during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Black week for the British Army

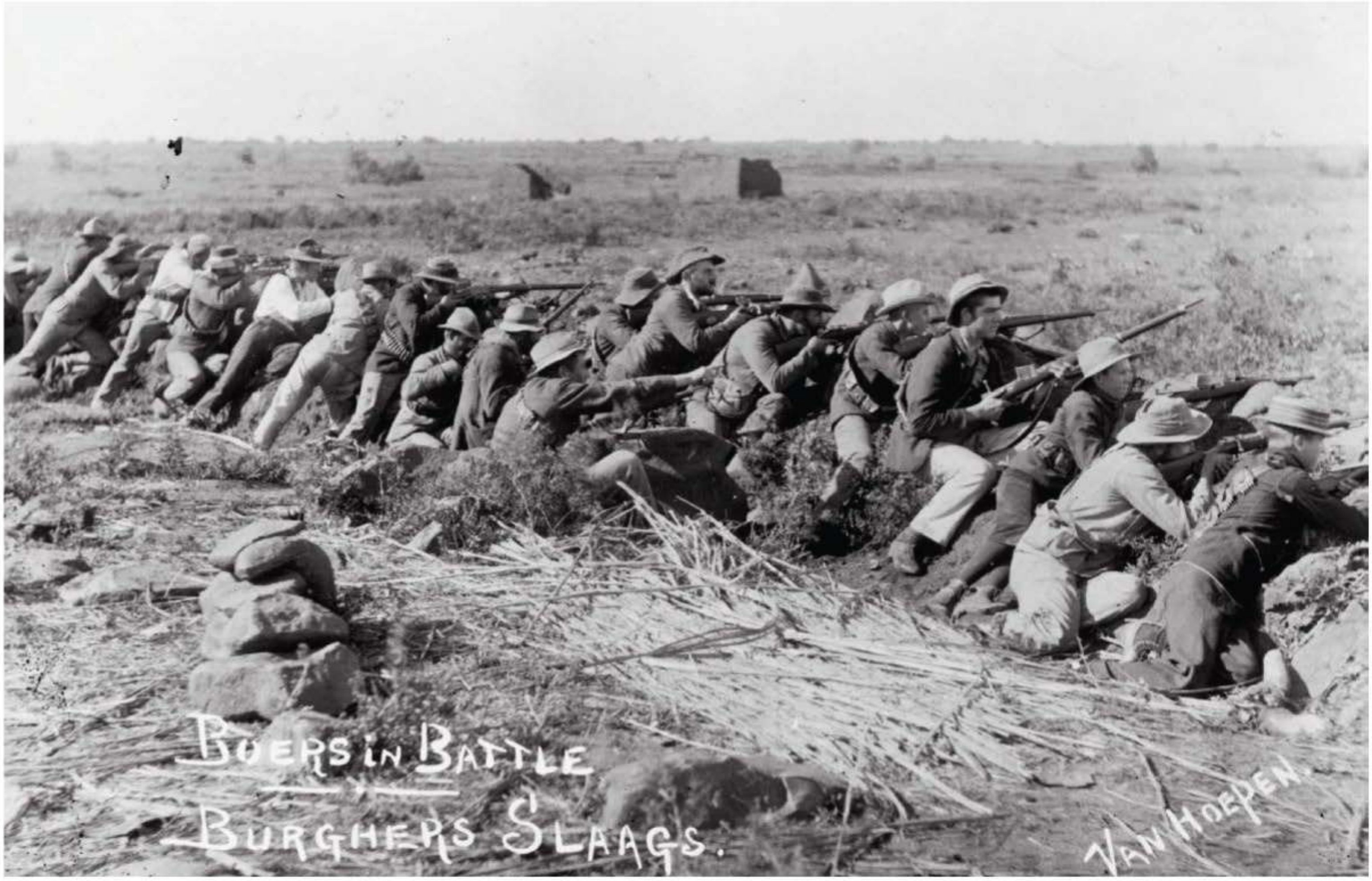
After war broke out between Britain and the two Boer republics of South Africa – the Orange Free State and the South African Republic (also known as the Transvaal Republic) – over the rights of foreigners living in the Boer lands, the British army suffered its third major defeat at the hands of irregular Boer forces at the Battle of Colenso on 15 December 1899.

The British had massed troops on the borders of the Transvaal but the Boers struck first after the declaration of war on 11 October 1899, crossing the border to besiege the towns of Ladysmith, Mafeking and Kimberley. British military efforts focused initially on breaking the sieges of these towns.

The first major battle came at Stormberg on 10 December 1899, when a British force assaulted a strong Boer position defending an important railway junction they had captured in the Cape Colony. The overconfident British suffered heavy losses when attacking the expert Boer marksmen. At Magersfontein, the next day, another British column attempting to relieve Kimberley attacked a Boer position, believing it to be on top of Magersfontein Hill. The Boers, however, had entrenched at the foot of the hill and surprised the British as they advanced across the plain, inflicting heavy casualties. A third column, attempting to relieve Ladysmith in Natal, was stopped at Colenso when it attempted to assault a Boer position overlooking a loop in the Tugela river. The British assault force was deploying in some confusion when the Boers opened fire. A second advancing column was also halted when its artillery went into action within range of Boer riflemen and many of the gunners were shot.

THE SECOND BOER WAR

DATES:	1899-1902
COMBATANTS:	British Empire vs Orange Free State and South African Republic (Boers)
FORCES ENGAGED:	Britain, 250,000; Boer republics, 70,000
CASUALTIES:	Britain, 22,000 (both combat and disease); Boer republics, 6,500
RESULT:	British victory


BOERS IN BATTLE
BURGHERS SLAAGS.
VAN HOEPEN.

A Boer commando deployed in a simple trench on the South African veldt. The Boers seriously embarrassed British forces, who did not expect to fight an army of expert marksmen armed with the most up-to-date magazine breechloaders.

Revolution in Colombia

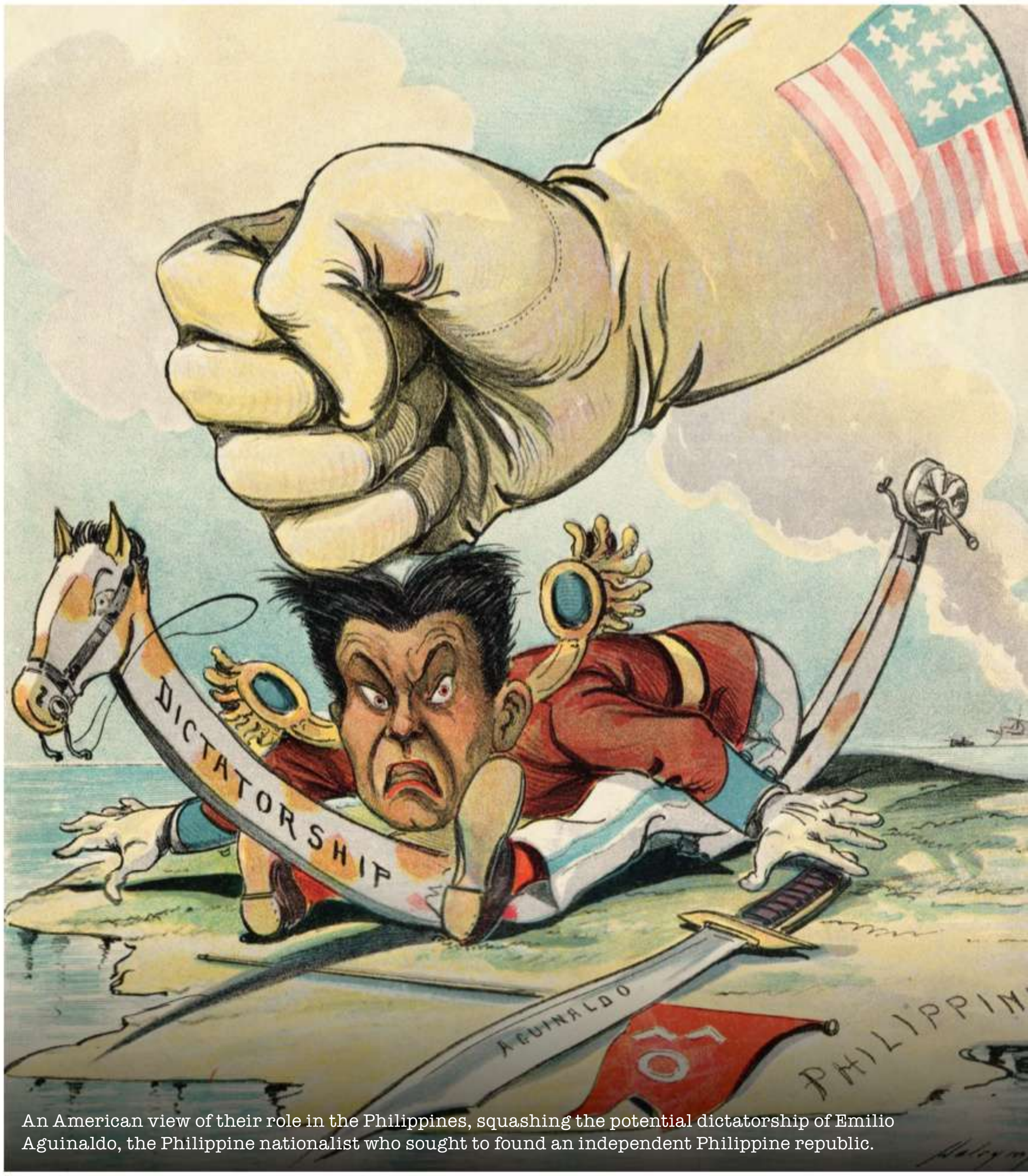
An economic crisis in Colombia produced a political uprising in several provinces dominated by the opposition, which led to a stalemate after the victory of the Liberal faction in the Battle of Peralonso in the north-east of the country on 15 December 1899.

A political crisis after a collapse of coffee prices provoked the Liberals – who believed themselves to be victims of fraud in the 1897 presidential election – to attempt a coup, taking advantage of deep divisions in the ruling Conservative-Nationalist alliance. However, the Liberals are themselves divided into "peace" and "war" factions, which has restricted their recruitment of fighting men.

The uprising was originally scheduled for 20 October, but once it became common knowledge the date was advanced to 18 October. The Liberals attempted to block the Magdalena river, an important thoroughfare from the heartlands of the country to the coast, along which much valuable international trade travels. However, their fleet of converted barges was sunk in a naval battle on 24 October.

Two Liberal armies assembled in the departments of Santander in the north and Cundinamarca in the centre of the country, but both of them suffered defeat. The Santander force, under Rafael Uribe Uribe retreated toward Venezuela until it made a stand at Peralonso.

> "THE LIBERALS ATTEMPTED TO BLOCK THE MAGDALENA RIVER, AN IMPORTANT THOROUGHFARE FROM THE HEARTLANDS OF THE COUNTRY TO THE COAST, ALONG WHICH MUCH VALUABLE INTERNATIONAL TRADE TRAVELS. HOWEVER, THEIR FLEET OF CONVERTED BARGES WAS SUNK"



An American view of their role in the Philippines, squashing the potential dictatorship of Emilio Aguinaldo, the Philippine nationalist who sought to found an independent Philippine republic.

Americans conquer Luzon

An American brigade landed in the Lingayen Gulf on Luzon in the Philippines, and advanced to San Jacinto where it defeated a Philippine force on 11 November 1899. Once this brigade links up with American forces advancing from the south, the Philippine nationalists will no longer be able to keep a large concentration of troops in the field.

Philippine nationalists, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, had initially welcomed the arrival of the Americans, seeing them as liberators from their Spanish colonial overlords. However, the Americans had every intention of occupying the Philippines themselves and replacing the Spanish as colonial overlords. Fighting broke out between the two sides around Manila on 4 February 1899 and spread throughout Luzon. The nationalists organized their forces around localities, and found it difficult to gather them for any length of time away from their bases, so the American army adopted a policy of sending columns to attack specific objectives, such as the Philippine nationalist capital at Malolos, north of Manila, which fell on 31 March. These columns divided the Philippine forces, making it impossible for them to unite in large enough numbers to challenge the more mobile American forces.

Legations siege brought to an end

A 55-day siege of the foreign legations in Peking finally ended on 14 August 1900 as a relief expedition from the coast reached the small garrison that was defending the embassy compound against far superior numbers of Chinese nationalists. The Chinese forces are known to Westerners as "the Boxers", although their Chinese name is the Righteous Harmony Society. Their main aim is to end the increasing control over Chinese internal affairs by foreign countries.

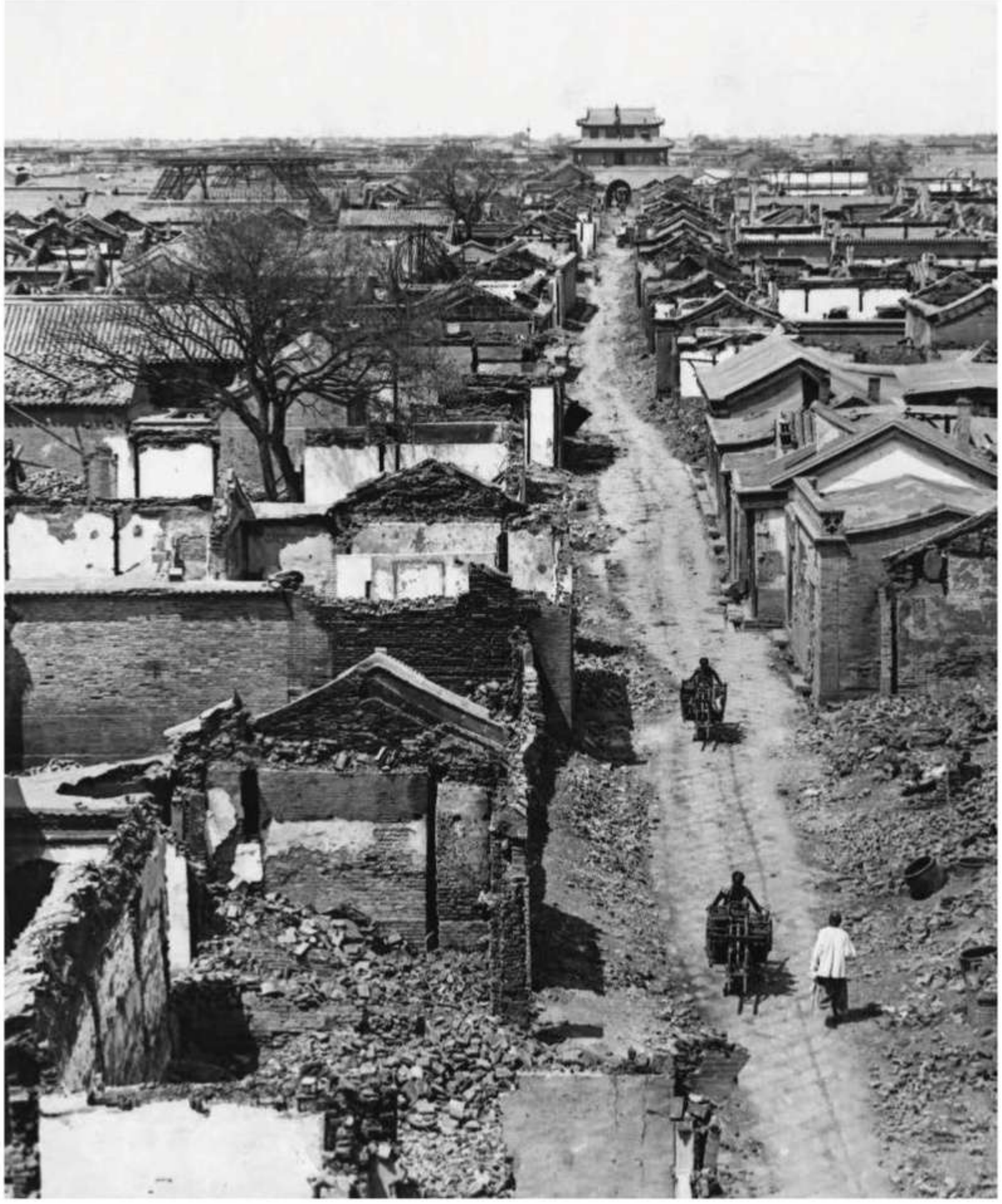
Tension between the Chinese imperial government and foreigners had increased throughout the course of the year. Chinese officials regarded the Boxers as ideal for challenging the foreign powers' demands for special treatment – which only encouraged the violence the Boxers directed towards foreigners, towards Chinese Christians and towards those Chinese who worked for foreigners.

In May 1900, while anti-Western riots became commonplace in northern China, reinforcements were rushed to Peking, although this did not prevent the Boxers burning down the Western-owned racecourse on 9 June. On 20 June, the German minister was murdered by Chinese troops and later that same day Chinese forces opened fire on the foreign legation. The very next day China declared war against the Great Powers.

Sniping, shelling and attempts to mine under the walls protecting the legation were more common than set-piece attacks, although the Boxers did make one major assault on the Cathedral, not part of the legation, which was driven off with heavy losses.

The first attempt to send a relief column from Tientsin to Peking by train failed when the Chinese cut the railway line. A second column of troops landed on the coast and lifted the siege of Tientsin on 23 July, having been delayed owing to the rumour that all the legation defenders had been massacred earlier in the month. Only after a letter reached Tientsin from Peking did the relieving force set off.

The force marched out of Tientsin on 4 August. The next day it made a dawn attack on a Chinese army at Yang Zun and swiftly defeated it, thereby ending any meaningful attempt by the Chinese to halt the advance. Once outside Peking, on 13 August, the allies quickly breached the walls and reached the legation.



The ruins of Old Tientsin after the Great Powers' bombardment of the city during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. The allied soldiers were merciless toward the northern Chinese populace.

THE HUNS

In July 1900, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany gave a speech to German soldiers being sent to China to defeat the Boxers. German sentiment was already outraged by the murder of their minister in Peking, and Wilhelm played on this when he gave a speech that included the following: "Once, a thousand years ago, the Huns under their King Attila made a name for themselves, one still potent in legend and tradition. May you in this way make the name German remembered in China for a thousand years so that no Chinaman will ever again dare to even squint at a German!" Although these words did not appear in the official text, a reporter noted down a shorthand copy of his words, much to the later embarrassment of the German ministry of foreign affairs when it was later used in Allied propaganda in 1914.

Great Powers seize Tientsin

The international settlement at Tientsin has been relieved by an allied force that has been marching up from the coast since 14 July 1900. Eight nations have contributed troops to this expedition: Austria-Hungary, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the United States.

Fighting between Boxers and foreigners began even before the legations siege. An attempt was made to seize the railway station on 15 June, but the presence of some 1,700 Russian troops made it impossible for the poorly armed Boxers.

The international settlement at Tientsin was put under siege on 17 June. Between 25,000 and 50,000 Boxers and Chinese troops surrounded the settlement, well equipped with field guns and cannons, but limited to mostly swords and spears as personal weapons. They were opposed by about 2,400 well-armed foreign troops in the international settlement, who were more than a match with their rifles, machine guns, artillery and the Taku forts. The foreign troops managed to destroy the Tientsin arsenal on 27 June, which seriously hampered the Chinese military effort in both Tientsin and against the force assembled by the "Eight-Nations Alliance" of the Great Powers on the coast.

Officers from the different contingents who defeated the Boxers in north China, 1900.

Stalemate into victory in Colombia

The Colombian Liberals suffered a morale-destroying defeat after a long battle against their Conservative rivals at Palonegro. The battle opened on 11 May 1900, and only on 25 May did the Liberal forces finally admit defeat in a decisive action of their country's civil war.

Both sides went into battle near Bucaramanga in the east of the country confident of victory. However, the Conservatives were both better equipped and outnumbered the Liberals two-to-one. Nonetheless, the Liberals more than held their own and after three days of fighting looked to be on the verge of victory. The Conservatives held the Liberals over the next two days and stalemate ensued until a timely resupply of ammunition for the Conservatives forced the Liberals to retreat rather than risk total defeat.

> "THE BATTLE OPENED ON 11 MAY 1900, AND ONLY ON 25 MAY DID THE LIBERAL FORCES FINALLY ADMIT DEFEAT IN A DECISIVE ACTION OF THEIR COUNTRY'S CIVIL WAR"

A London crowd celebrates the relief of Mafeking in May 1900, ending a 217-day siege that captivated national attention.

Boers beaten

After reverses at Spion Kop in January and Vaal Krantz in February, the British offensives of 1900 have succeeded in capturing the two capitals of the Boer republics, Bloemfontein and Johannesburg. Mafeking, Ladysmith and Kimberley have all been relieved. A skilful operation was carried out by General Lord Roberts along the Orange river, where he fooled the Boer commander about his line of march, eventually surrounding the Boer force and forcing its surrender.

In spite of these defeats, the Boers show no sign of giving up the struggle. Instead they are withdrawing as the British advance, only to reoccupy the countryside after the British have moved on.

Boer War ends

The long and at times bitter struggle between Boers and British officially came to an end on 31 May 1902 with the Treaty of Vereeniging. They have sustained a war almost without battles for nearly two years, relying on mobility and hit-and-run tactics to wage a guerrilla resistance against the occupiers of their countries.

The guerrilla war opened in September 1900, although battles were still fought occasionally when Boer commandos gathered together in larger groups in order to make a major raid on a British garrison or marching column. One of the most successful of these raids occurred in March 1902 when the Boers attacked the British at Tweebosch and captured the second-in-command of the British forces, General Lord Methuen.

The British responded harshly to the Boers' ability to move among a sympathetic population, establishing "concentration camps" where Boer civilians were interned to prevent them from assisting the Boer commandos to live off the country. In parallel with this, farms were burned as families were moved out of them, restricting the supplies available to the Boers. These harsh policies eventually succeeded in driving the commandos to surrender to the British.

A blindfolded Boer prisoner is escorted into captivity by British soldiers. The war between Boer commandos and British forces was an ugly matter. Shooting prisoners was not uncommon.

"Mad Mullah" threatens British Somaliland

The self-proclaimed Mahdi of Somaliland, Abdullah Hassan, known to the British as the "Mad Mullah", suffered a defeat at the hands of British-officered Ethiopian troops on 31 May 1903. His four-year campaign of resistance against the British, and against Somali clans co-operating with the British, looks to be in jeopardy.

Sayed Mohammed Abdullah Hassan was born in 1864 a Dulbahanta, a clan of the protectorate of British Somaliland in the Horn of Africa. A pious Moslem in a puritanical tradition, the story of Sudan's Mahdi revolution had a strong influence over him, prompting him to get Somalis to return to their Islamic heritage, and to urge them to expel the infidel British from the territory. He found a following among the nomads of the interior and in 1899 began to resist both the British regime and the Ethiopian monarchy that controlled the Ogaden, a region considered by Somali nomads to be their own.

Abdullah Hassan initially targeted Somalis who benefited economically from the British regime, regarding them as "collaborators". In April 1901 the British launched an expedition against him. In just over a year, a column of troops, about 1,500 strong, managed to inflict a significant defeat on him, capturing about 800 of his followers, with even more of them becoming casualties. Abdullah Hassan renewed his efforts at recruitment and resumed his raids in early 1902, this time with some 1,500 riflemen, necessitating a second British expedition in June. In October 1902, the British forces clashed with Abdullah Hassan's followers at Erigo and inflicted another severe defeat, capturing many of the animals so important to nomadic life.

The British sent more troops to Somaliland and in 1903 co-ordinated operations with the Ethiopians. The campaign had mixed results, as Abdullah Hassan's warriors achieved one or two successes against isolated reconnaissance patrols, although in the end they were forced to flee and disband.

> "IN JUST OVER A YEAR, A COLUMN OF TROOPS, ABOUT 1,500 STRONG, MANAGED TO INFLICT A SIGNIFICANT DEFEAT ON [ABDULLAH HASSAN], CAPTURING ABOUT 800 OF HIS FOLLOWERS"

America declares victory over Filipinos

The establishment of a civilian administration of the Philippines on 4 July 1902, under William Howard Taft, coincided with the declaration by the United States that the war against Philippine nationalists resisting the American takeover of the former Spanish colony was at an end.

The American campaign against the Philippine nationalists was a brutal affair. Torture was standard operating procedure for the American troops, and they also applied a "concentration camp" policy similar to that used by the British against the Boers. "Kill and burn! The more you kill and burn the better you will please me," stated General Jake Smith after Filipino irregulars massacred a patrol in the town of Balangiga on Samar Island.

After the capture of Emilio Aguinaldo on 23 March 1901, following a stratagem by General Frederick Funston using Filipino scouts who pretended to surrender, removing any central coordination of the resistance. Isolated nationalists continue to resist and the Moros – Moslems living on Mindanao seeking independence from any non-Moslem regime – are nowhere near being subdued

American soldiers in the Philippines stand around their Gatling gun. The American army fought a very vicious war against a guerrilla foe who resented the replacement of a Spanish overlord with an American one.

IN BRIEF

Macedonian nationalists, with the support of the Bulgarian government, staged an uprising in September 1902 against the Ottoman administration of this Balkan region. The Ottomans employed systematic massacres to suppress the revolt.

The Russo-Japanese War (1904-05)

At twenty-eight minutes past midnight on 9 February 1904, at Port Arthur, a Russian naval base in Manchuria, two explosions occurred, which were later followed by a third.

They heralded the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War, as Japanese destroyers, under cover of darkness, launched a surprise attack on the Russian Pacific fleet based here, damaging two Russian battleships and a cruiser. The results could have been worse, as the Japanese fired 16 torpedoes altogether that night, but the other 13 either missed or failed to explode.

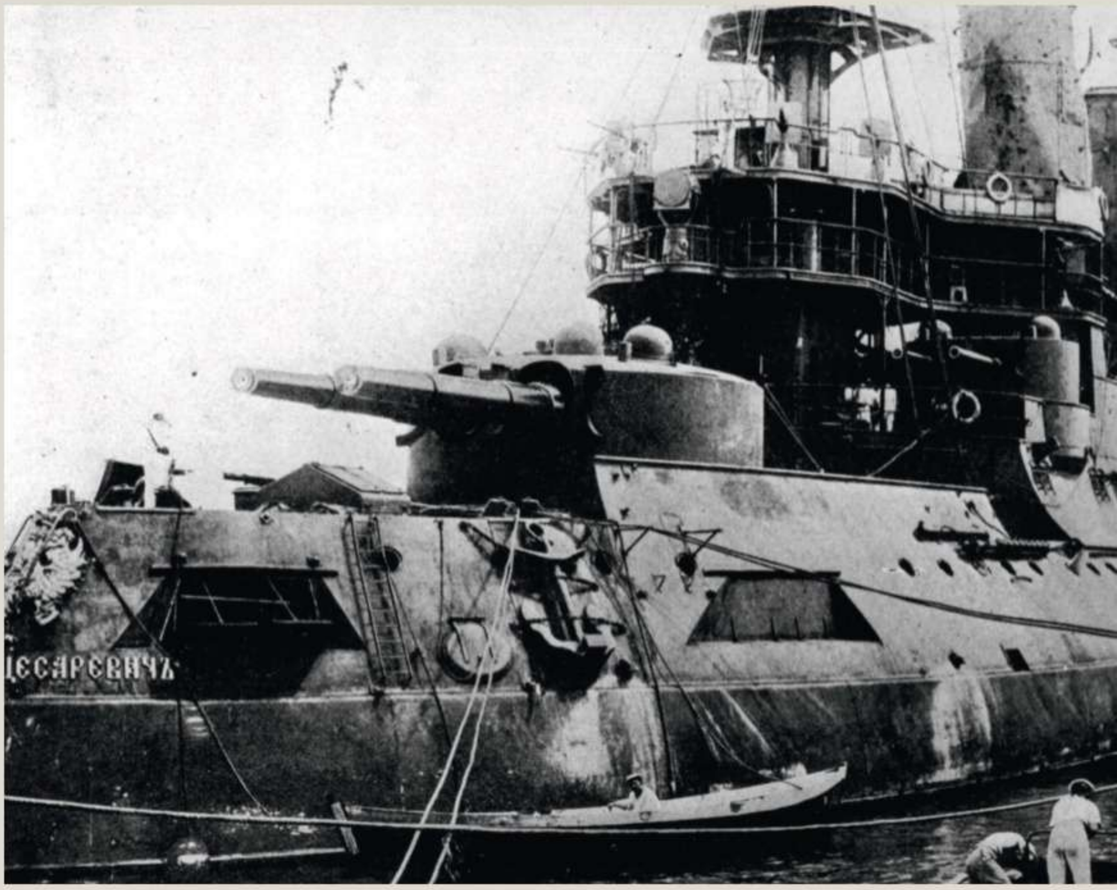
With the sun up, the Russians prepared to put to sea for battle. The Japanese intended to oblige the Russians, as their fleet, commanded by Admiral Togo Heihachiro, approached, hoping to finish off the Russian squadron. However, although the Russians had been badly mauled, they were still full of fight and the Japanese beat a hasty retreat, unwilling to risk their ships against both the naval guns of the Russian ships and the shore-based ones that defended the harbour.

While nothing new to the Japanese, their surprise attack marked a departure from traditional warfare by the European powers. Countries were expected to declare war, allowing a reasonable interval prior to beginning military operations, but the Japanese ignored this. Although they had broken off diplomatic relations, feelings between Russia and Japan had been bad since the Russians had forced the Japanese to relinquish Port Arthur, a trophy of their victory over China in 1895, only to compel the Chinese to grant them a lengthy lease. Furthermore, after the Boxer Rebellion, the Russians had put a considerable number of troops into Manchuria, where they protected the Chinese Eastern Railway, built by the Chinese at Russia's behest using French money. Japan negotiated for some time to get the troops withdrawn, fearing Russian ambitions toward Japan's own territorial target of Korea, and the Russians repeatedly made promises which they did not keep to pull the troops out of Manchuria. Nor did they seem willing to negotiate with the Japanese over Korea. Having decided a conflict was inevitable, Japanese leaders chose to strike at a time of their own choosing.

"THEIR SURPRISE ATTACK MARKED A DEPARTURE FROM TRADITIONAL WARFARE. COUNTRIES WERE EXPECTED TO DECLARE WAR, WITH A REASONABLE INTERVAL PRIOR TO BEGINNING MILITARY OPERATION"

The Russian war effort was hampered by a variety of problems. The average Russian soldier or sailor was less well educated, than the Japanese, and even those of officer class. At a more fundamental level, the Russians still trained their troops in outdated volley-fire methods better suited to muskets than bolt-action rifles, while the Japanese had adopted individualized training on rifle ranges, with each soldier taking aim on his own initiative once ordered to fire. Only in artillery did the Russians have an advantage, but even here they were unable to make full use of it thanks to an artillery doctrine that exposed batteries to enemy fire, and a lack of training for its artillerymen. The situation in the navy was just as bad, perhaps worse – training was hampered by the ice-bound nature of most Russian ports, and the Russians were clearly unfamiliar with the rangefinders and telescopic sights which were just entering naval service.

By contrast, the Japanese presented a comparative picture of efficiency and enthusiasm for the task at hand, which they demonstrated at the very first battle on land, at the Yalu river in April 1904. The Russians



The Russian battleship Tsesarevich in Tsingtao harbour shows damage caused during the Battle of the Yellow Sea, August 1904. She was the only battleship to escape from Port Arthur in the war.

Russian warships in Port Arthur harbour after being damaged by Japanese shelling during the siege. The war revolved around this key naval base, but the Japanese also sought to eliminate or reduce Russian influence in northern China.

made no attempt to conceal their positions, while the Japanese disguised some of their scouts as fishermen to get a clear picture of Russian deployment. They then began building bridges, even while under enemy fire, to get across the river.

As is always the case in a prolonged war, procedures and tactics changed as both sides adapted to new technologies, hitherto only partly understood in the context of training manuals and exercises. The use of artillery was transformed by what the two armies demonstrated on the field to observers from other armies. Previously, artillery's main task had been to disable the enemy's artillery but the war showed that artillery was far more effective bombarding enemy infantry, especially as superior technology meant that guns could be deployed out of sight, and indirect fire could be brought down on the enemy's infantry positions.

Machine guns also came to prominence for the first time. The Japanese gave up an attempt to capture Port Arthur by frontal assault because Russian machine guns caused such heavy casualties, and turned to siege operations instead. In defending Port Arthur, the Russians also deployed barbed-wire obstacles to protect their trenches and slow attacking infantry, forcing them to spend more time under fire. By the time of the Battle of Mukden between 21 February and 10 March 1905, the Russian army was dug in in lines of trenches, with machine-gun strongpoints, protected by a belt of barbed-wire obstacles. To counter this, the Japanese introduced a system of attacking by rushing forward in alternating small groups, keeping close to the ground. It was a clear portent of the coming First World War.

As on land, the war at sea showed the direction combat would take in the twentieth century. At the Battle of Tsushima on 27 May 1905, just like the attack on Port Arthur in February 1904, the Japanese used destroyers armed with torpedoes as part of their combined operations, firing no fewer than 74 torpedoes at the Russians in one all-out attack that claimed a Russian battleship and two cruisers. Mines were also very effective during the war, even claiming a Russian battleship during an engagement on 13 April 1904.

Finally, and perhaps most telling for the future, both the Battle of the Yellow Sea on 10 August 1904 and the Battle of Tsushima illustrated that naval actions would take place at far longer ranges than had been foreseen. Accurate gunnery with large-calibre guns was possible at ranges of 12,000 yards (11,000 m), twice the distance anticipated as the maximum effective range for naval combat. Furthermore, experience showed that the heaviest shells, from 12-inch guns, were far more effective than lighter guns of 6-inch or 8-inch calibre that were also carried by battleships. These two factors had a key effect on warship design, leading to the building of the first "all big gun" battleship, HMS Dreadnought.

By the war's end, both sides were ready for peace. Defeat had shaken the very foundations of the Russian political system and even for Japan, victory had been costly. Her economy could not have withstood continuing the war for much longer when the treaty of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was signed on 5 September 1905, bringing the war to an end.

"THE JAPANESE USED DESTROYERS ARMED WITH TORPEDOES AS PART OF THEIR COMBINED OPERATIONS, FIRING 74 TORPEDOES AT THE RUSSIANS IN ONE ALL-OUT ATTACK THAT CLAIMED A RUSSIAN BATTLESHIP AND TWO CRUISERS"

Japanese infantry on the hills overlooking Port Arthur. The ordinary Japanese soldier displayed the dogged determination of the Samurai to win or die trying.

Aircraft used to drop bombs

Italian soldiers display Turkish flags captured during operation in Libya. Italy secured a small Mediterranean empire during this war.

Italian troops occupied Rhodes and the other islands of the Dodecanese in May 1912, after their troops had captured Tripoli and Tobruk in Libya in October 1911 against weak opposition. The war was started by Italy with the express intent of annexing Ottoman territory – specifically the provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in North Africa, known to Italian nationalists as the "fourth shore".

The first use of an aircraft in war occurred in October and November 1911, when Italian aeroplanes carried out reconnaissance and bombing missions during their war against the Ottomans in Libya. A reconnaissance was made by air for the first time on 23 October, while the first bomb was dropped from a Nieuport IV on 1 November.

Balkans in turmoil

The Bulgarian army inflicted a significant setback on Greek troops approaching Sofia when it attacked down the Sturma and Mesta river valleys at the end of July 1913. The action resulted in a general armistice in the second of two Balkan Wars that have transformed the map of the region.

The wars began in October 1912, when the Balkan countries almost as one declared war on the Ottoman Empire. Greece, Montenegro, Serbia and Bulgaria all claimed parts of the European portion of The Ottoman Empire. Faced with a united alliance, the Ottomans were rapidly driven back almost to Asia, holding only Adrianople and Constantinople and the territory in between. The fighting halted until the spring of 1913, when Adrianople fell. Crete was claimed by Greece, and a treaty ended the war on 30 May 1913.

The treaty did not cover the distribution of the conquered territories, and Serbia and Greece both coveted parts of Macedonia that had been occupied by Bulgaria. The Bulgarian government thought its best chance came in striking first and at the end of June 1913 the Bulgarian army launched unsuccessful attacks on Serbia and Greece, which ended with the Turks even regaining some of their former European territory.

Balkan irregulars in characteristic mountainous terrain. The Balkan wars ended Turkey's European empire, leaving only a small area to the west of Constantinople in Turkish hands.

OBITUARY

Sir Redvers Buller (1839-1908)

The man who was perhaps late-Victorian Britain's most archetypal soldier passed away on 2 June 1908, aged 68. Sir Redvers Buller was the holder of the Victoria Cross, an old Etonian and a veteran of some of the most significant campaigns of the 1860–99 period.

His most meritorious conduct on the battlefield came during the Zulu War, when he won the Victoria Cross during a battle at which he rescued no fewer than three men on separate occasions from the Zulus.

Buller was undeniably brave and was popular with both troops and the British public, but his tactical record as a commander during the opening stages of the second Anglo-Boer War in 1899 was less impressive. Defeated twice by the Boers – at Colenso on 15 December 1899 and at Spion Kop on 24 January 1900 – he was replaced as commander-in-chief by General Lord Roberts, although he retained command of the Army of Natal. Nevertheless, Buller showed great concern for the welfare of his men, always ensuring they were fed, adequately housed and received proper medical attention.

When newspapermen asserted he was incompetent in 1901, Sir Redvers Buller answered their criticisms in a speech in London, but was deemed to have breached military discipline and was dismissed on half pay. He retired to his Devon country estates where he lived out his retirement.

He is survived by his wife and daughter.

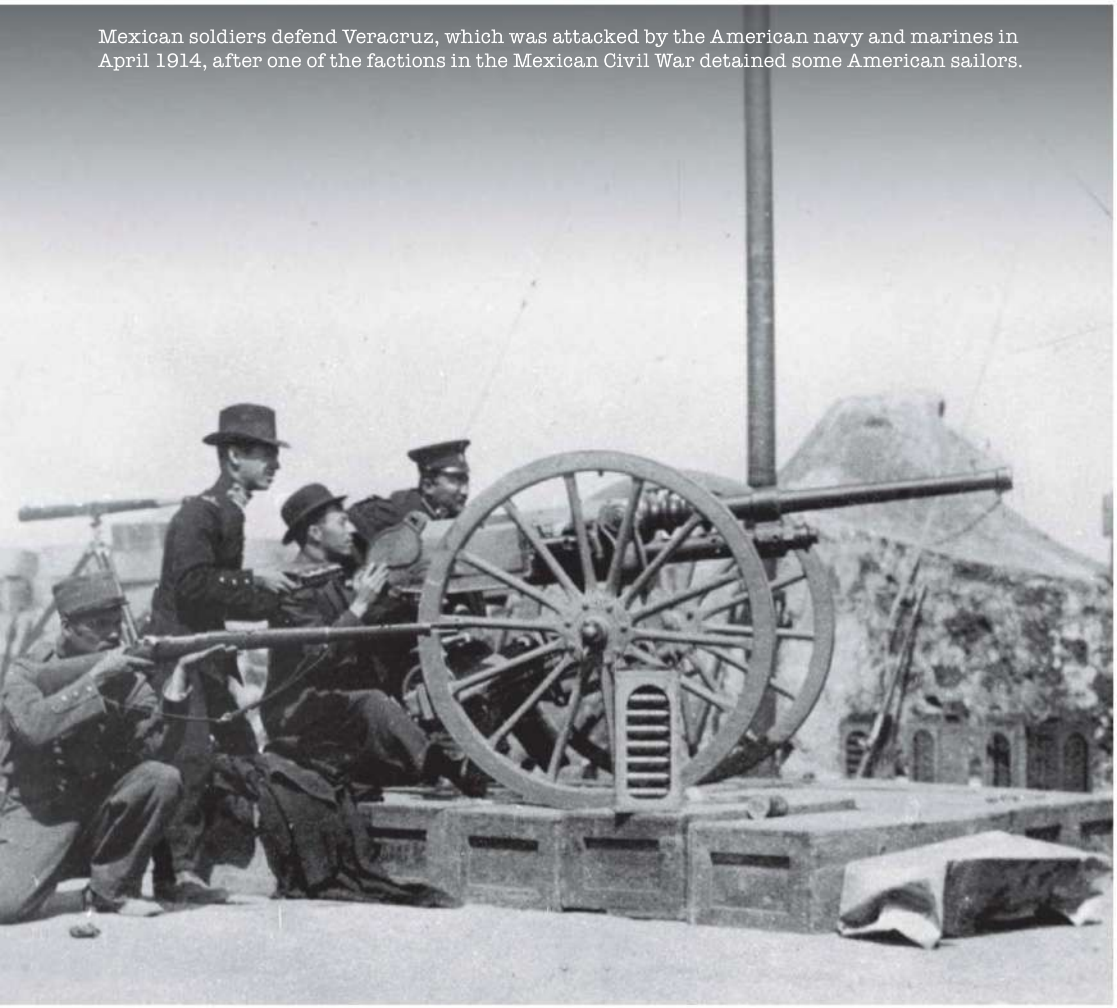
> “SIR REDVERS BULLER WAS UNDENIABLY BRAVE AND WAS POPULAR WITH BOTH TROOPS AND THE BRITISH PUBLIC”

Sir Redvers Buller was a brave man and a fine military administrator, but his career ended in controversy.

IN BRIEF

- On 3 August 1904, a British force reached Lhasa after several battles against a hopelessly inferior Tibetan army. The war began over British territorial demands along the Indian-Tibetan border.
- A Uruguayan landowner attempted to overthrow the government but was defeated at the Battle of Masoller on 1 September 1904. Aparicio Saravia had gathered together an army of farmers and ranchers, but when his cavalry charged against regular army machine guns they suffered typically heavy casualties.
- A three-year rebellion by Herero tribesmen in the German colony of South-West Africa that began in October 1904 was brutally suppressed by German military forces. The Germans used concentration camps, forced labour and even massacres to intimidate the Herero into surrendering.
- A revolution in Mexico that began on 20 November 1910 overthrew the long-standing regime of Porfirio Diaz, and led to a state of civil war after the army assassinated the revolutionary president Francisco Madero in 1913.

Americans bombard Veracruz



Mexican soldiers defend Veracruz, which was attacked by the American navy and marines in April 1914, after one of the factions in the Mexican Civil War detained some American sailors.

A Mexican city was turned into a battleground as a consequence of a perceived "insult" to the American flag a few weeks earlier, as Veracruz was bombarded by a large US fleet on 21 April 1914. At the end of the day, the United States had taken control of the port, and brought the two countries to the brink of war.

The troubles began at Tampico where a squadron of US ships had gathered to offer some protection to the numerous US citizens living there, mostly working in the oil industry. Mexican soldiers arrested a group of US sailors who had come ashore to get some fuel. Although they were later released, and in spite of a formal apology, the US admiral on the spot demanded a 21-gun salute to the American flag. The Mexicans declined.

On 20 April, US president Woodrow Wilson requested approval from Congress to use US military and naval forces to secure recognition of US rights from General Victoriano Huerta, commander of one of the factions in the Mexican civil war, whose soldiers had arrested the sailors.

The day after, the commander of the US Atlantic Fleet opened fire on Veracruz and landed nearly 800 US Marines and sailors to seize the customs house in the hope of finding some guns that were due to be imported that day. Street fighting broke out, with the Mexican Naval Academy a key strongpoint in the battle.

> "AT THE END OF THE DAY, THE UNITED STATES HAD TAKEN CONTROL OF THE PORT, AND BROUGHT THE TWO COUNTRIES TO THE BRINK OF WAR"

Austro-Hungarian Archduke shot, European crisis ensues

The embassies and foreign ministries of Europe were hives of activity as the clouds of war appeared on the horizon following the assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian empire's throne. The assassination tipped the Continent into a political crisis. It seems likely that the ultimatum delivered to Serbia by the Austro-Hungarian government on 23 July 1914 will lead to war between the two states, which the various alliances between European states may well transform into a general war.

On 28 June 1914, a Bosnian Serb, Gavrilo Princip, a member of a nationalist group aiming to create a united South Slav state based on Serbia, fired three shots at the car carrying Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife the Countess Sophie, killing both. It was not the first incident that day as a bomb had detonated behind the car killing those in the following vehicle in the motorcade.

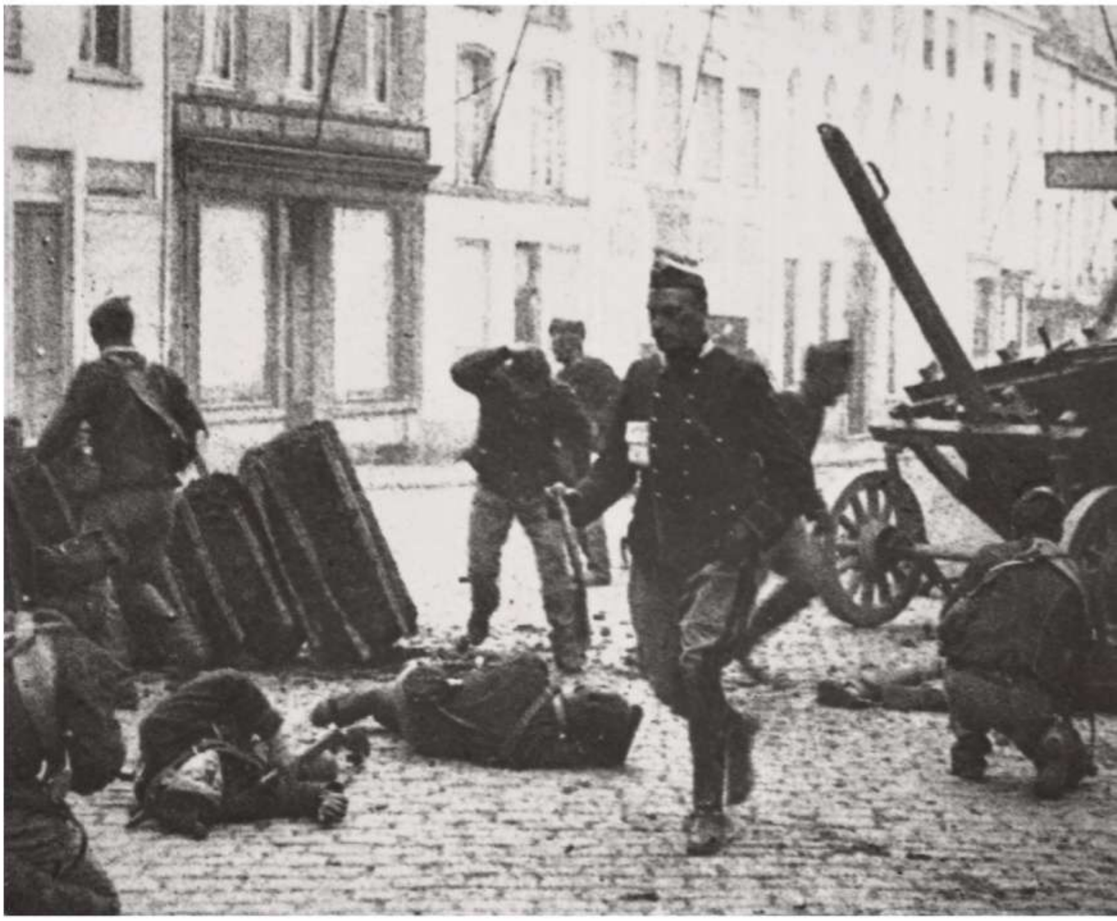
Archduke Franz Ferdinand with his wife and the car that will carry them to their assassination in Sarajevo, 28 June 1914.

War in Europe, Belgian fortresses fall

The last forts defending the Belgian city of Namur surrendered to German forces on 23 August 1914, the forts of Liège having surrendered seven days earlier, after a siege lasting ten days.

German troops invaded Belgium as part of their operations against France, after Germany declared war on 3 August. The German government sent an ultimatum to the Belgian government demanding free passage through Belgian territory, but Belgium preferred to remain neutral, so the Germans invaded on the 4th and invested Liège, bombarding the fortresses around the city and launching an assault during the night of 5/6 August. Once heavy 420mm guns arrived on 12 August, the bombardment of the fortresses quickly forced them to surrender and the city, with its crucial bridges over the Meuse river intact, fell into German hands.

From Liège, the Germans advanced on Namur, reaching that city on 21 August. As their heavy guns had been so successful at Liège, they promptly deployed them again and forced the surrender of the forts in two days.



A still from a film taken of Belgian troops by a British film cameramen shows their defence of a roadblock hastily thrown together in the town of Alost.

OBITUARY

Joshua Chamberlain (1828-1914)

This hero of Gettysburg and college professor died on 24 February 1914, from the effects of a wound he suffered during the siege of Petersburg in 1864.

Chamberlain was born in Brewer, Maine, and grew up with strong abolitionist views. At the time of the American Civil War, he was a professor of rhetoric at Bowdoin College, and enlisted in the 20th Maine Volunteers. He saw action at Fredericksburg, Antietam, and Chancellorsville, but achieved his greatest fame for his conduct of the defence of Little Round Top, a hill on the Gettysburg battlefield that was a key point in the Federal lines, for which he received the Medal of Honor. He continued on active service until the end of the war.

After the war, he was four times elected governor of Maine and served as president of Bowdoin College.

He is survived by three children.

> “HE SAW ACTION AT FREDERICKSBURG, ANTIETAM, AND CHANCELLORSVILLE ”

Allied disaster on the frontiers

After a series of engagements in Alsace, Lorraine and in the Ardennes, the French and British armies are for the most part in headlong retreat from a sizeable German force that has crossed Belgium and is entering France, its objective apparently Paris. The Battles of the Frontiers ended on 24 August 1914.

Germany's war plan seems to have been ideally suited to the French one. While the French plan envisaged an attack into Alsace and Lorraine, with covering forces stationed on the Belgian frontier, the German plan wheeled a large invasion force through Belgium to strike at the rear of the French armies. The effect was to trap the French between the Germans in Alsace and Lorraine, and those advancing through Belgium.

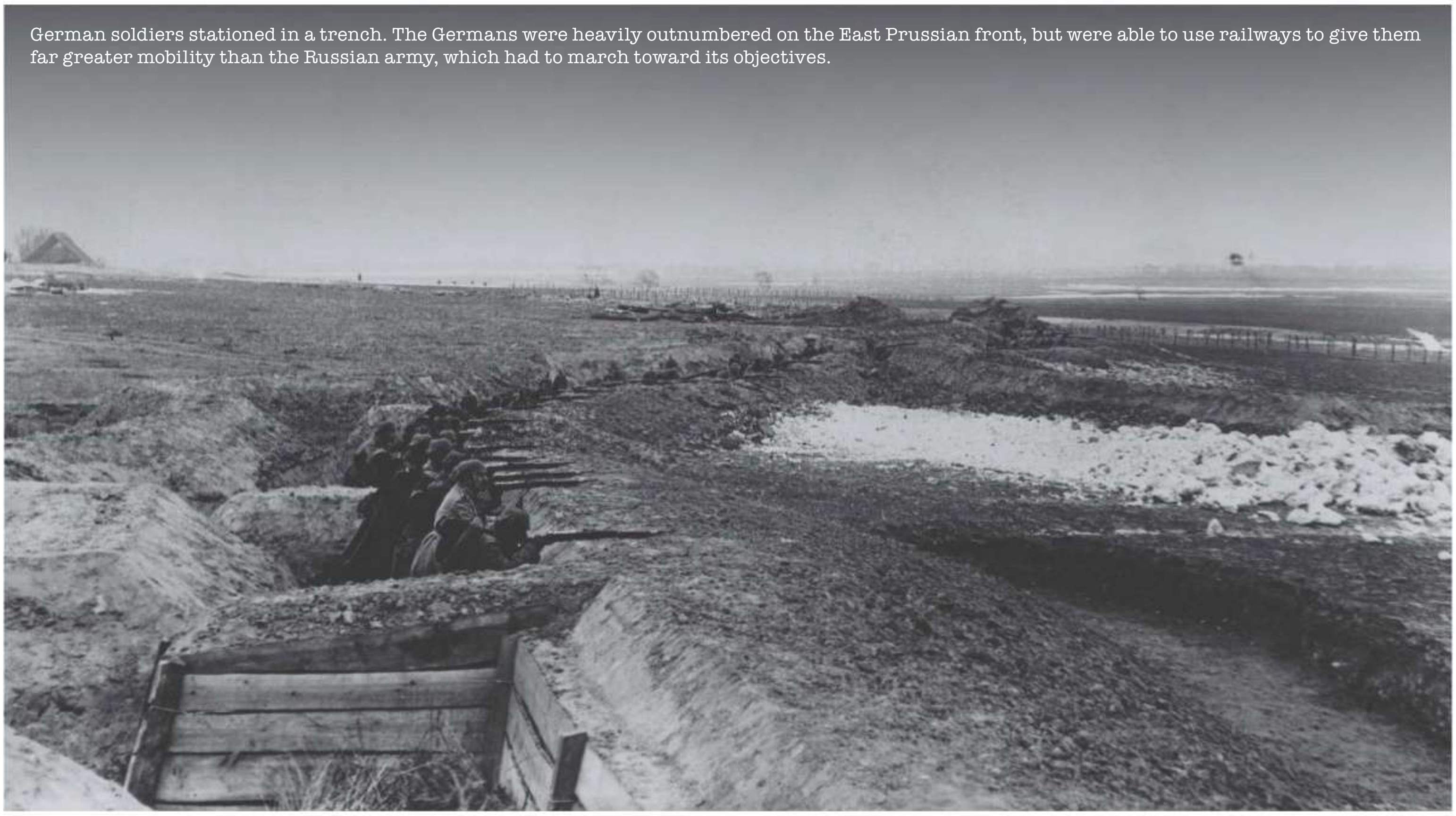
The early actions occurred in Alsace, around Mulhouse, on 7 August, but the main French offensive took place on 14 August, by which time the Germans were advancing through Belgium after capturing Liège.

French tactics relied on shelling the German positions with 75mm field artillery using shrapnel, followed by an infantry assault. The Germans, however, were well dug in and were well supplied with machine guns. Shrapnel was not effective against the entrenchments and the French assaults in skirmish lines were badly cut up by German machine guns. Not only did the French attacks fail, the Germans were able to switch over to the offensive in Alsace and Lorraine and force a general retreat.

Further north, in the Ardennes and Belgium, the French fared even worse. With the Germans advancing, the two armies met on 22 August, but it only took a day of fighting for the same results to occur as in Alsace and Lorraine. In Belgium, around Charleroi, the French forces were heavily outnumbered and almost overwhelmed. Only at Mons, where the British Expeditionary Force was deployed, did the Germans receive a setback on 23 August, although just as at Charleroi, the Germans had superior numbers and were able to outflank the British position.

German infantry muster in a French village. The Germans fended off French attacks on their common border with France while sending their main strength on a flanking march through Belgium and Luxembourg into northern France, pivoting their advance on the city of Verdun.

Russian army surrenders at Tannenberg



German soldiers stationed in a trench. The Germans were heavily outnumbered on the East Prussian front, but were able to use railways to give them far greater mobility than the Russian army, which had to march toward its objectives.

A Russian army has been destroyed by a German one at Tannenberg, East Prussia, during a battle that lasted three days, 23–31 August 1914.

The Russian offensive was slow in coming, owing to the difficulties of mobilizing the large Russian armies with a relatively poor system of transportation in a vast country. However, after the first troops crossed the frontier on 15 August, the first battle was fought at Gumbinnen on 20 August. The Russians won and the situation looked precarious for the Germans.

The commander of the German Eighth Army defending Prussia, General Maximilian von Prittwitz, was removed from command after this defeat and was replaced by General Paul von Hindenburg and General Erich Ludendorff, who devised a plan to deal with the situation.

As the Russians advanced with two armies, one east of the German forces and the other to the south, Ludendorff decided to attack the left wing of the southern army with a small part of his army, at the furthest point possible from the eastern one. If this developed well, he reckoned he'd be able to shift his forces southward and attack the right wing, too. The plan, set in motion on 24 August, went almost to perfection, as the Russian army to the east remained almost motionless. Meanwhile, the southern army was ordered to move ever further west, increasing the gap between it and the other force, which the Germans quickly exploited. The Russians effectively advanced into a trap, were surrounded and thousands surrendered. On 29 August, the commander shot himself rather than report the defeat. Of a strength of 150,000, some 125,000 Russians were killed, wounded or captured. The Germans lost 20,000.

> “OF A STRENGTH OF 150,000, SOME 125,000 RUSSIANS WERE KILLED, WOUNDED OR CAPTURED. THE GERMANS LOST 20,000”

IN BRIEF

- The Germans killed an estimated 5,521 civilians in Belgium during their march through that country. The most notorious incidents occurred at Louvain on 25 August 1914 where the university library and other buildings in the town were destroyed by fire, and at Dinant on the same day, where 896 inhabitants were killed.
- A strong British naval force overwhelmed German light naval forces (cruisers and destroyers) at the Battle of Heligoland Bight on 28 August 1914. Three German light cruisers were sunk, out of six committed to battle. The British lost no ships.

Germans withdraw after threatening Paris

Parisian taxis helped rush reinforcements from the French capital's garrison to the front line at the Marne.

The Germans are in retreat after being outmanoeuvred by French and British forces in heavy fighting to the east of Paris on 6-10 September 1914. The battle took place along the Marne river and the campaign involved a million men on both sides.

As the Allied retreat neared Paris, after they had failed to withstand the Germans in the Battles of the Frontiers, the French government fled on 2 September.

The French overall commander, General Joseph Joffre, had received word that the Germans were sending troops from the West to the East, and so, gambling that the enemy had thus weakened his army, ordered a counter-attack which had been suggested by the military governor of Paris, General Joseph Gallieni.

Troops from Paris were sent to attack the Germans in the flank as they bypassed the city, which they did at the river Ourcq on 5 September. The following day the attack resumed, but the German commander of the forces directly engaged, General Alexander von Kluck, shifted troops from his left to defeat this threat to his right. What he did not realize was that the British Expeditionary Force and the French Fifth Army were in a position to move into the gap thus created between von Kluck's army and the German Second Army.

The two Allied armies, once in this position, turned to attack the flanks of the German forces, threatening to cut von Kluck off from his line of retreat. On 9 September, a withdrawal to Soissons was ordered by the German command, which became more general as the Germans sought a new line of defence along the Aisne, having suffered some 250,000 casualties to the Allied 263,000.

> “A WITHDRAWAL TO SOISSONS WAS ORDERED BY THE GERMAN COMMAND, WHICH BECAME MORE GENERAL AS THE GERMANS SOUGHT A NEW LINE OF DEFENCE”

Germans repel the Allies

During the middle of September 1914, the German army defending the Chemin des Dames in the Champagne region of France repelled several Allied attacks on their position overlooking the river Aisne. Both sides then prepared to try outflanking moves across the largely undefended terrain reaching northwards from the Aisne to the North Sea.

As the Germans dug in on 11 September, the French and British built pontoon bridges across the Aisne and continued with the attacks they had begun after the Battle of the Marne ended two days earlier. The main attack was carried out by the British and the French Fifth and Sixth Armies, but by this time the Germans were beginning to receive reinforcements from troops left to mop up enemy forces in Belgium and around Mauberge. These handily filled the gap that still existed between General Alexander von Kluck's First Army and the German Second Army.

The Germans deployed their machine guns and artillery to blunt the French and British assaults, which made some progress but were hindered by the lack of good positions for supporting artillery. Once the Germans came under steady shellfire, though, they began digging in and the battle turned into two weeks of shelling and sniping as both sides began using the spade more than the rifle. Local attacks and counter-attacks replaced larger-scale operations involving corps and armies as both sides attempted to secure small advantages. Meanwhile, the hot, dry weather of August and early September changed to rain with a cold north wind.

> “THE MAIN ATTACK WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE BRITISH AND THE FRENCH FIFTH AND SIXTH ARMIES, BUT BY THIS TIME THE GERMANS WERE BEGINNING TO RECEIVE REINFORCEMENTS”

Russians gain victory, and Lwow

The Russian army has succeeded in its opening campaign against Austro-Hungarian forces in Galicia. The city of Lwow, known as Lemberg to the Austro-Hungarians, fell to the Russians on 3 September 1914, leaving most of Galicia in Russian hands.

The Austro-Hungarians initially adopted a defensive posture toward the larger Russian army, waiting for the Germans to finish off the French before joining an offensive, as had been agreed before the start of the War. However, with the Russian mobilization proceeding slowly, the Austro-Hungarian commander, General Conrad von Hötzendorf, decided to risk an attack and allowed his troops in northern Galicia to make a general advance toward the River Bug. One group pushed north-eastwards, in the vague direction of Brest-Litovsk, the other due east.

At the same time, the Russians also attacked on two fronts. One pushed westward toward Galicia, and the other south-westward from the area of Warsaw toward Lwow, so that both sides were effectively advancing head on toward one another. The Russian south-western advance ran into difficulties almost at the beginning and was forced to pull back in fighting around Krasnik and Komarow in late August. General Conrad grew overconfident and attempted to reinforce his army advancing directly eastwards, which had been badly beaten by Russian forces at the River Zlota Lipa. His troops, however, advanced straight into a trap of his own making, and his reinforcing army was caught in a hard battle to the west of Lwow, while the Russians reinforced their armies to the north. When these attacked, they easily broke through the weakened Austro-Hungarian front and forced a hurried retreat that virtually degenerated into a rout. Only the poor roads saved the situation, as the Austro-Hungarians lost 400,000 men to the Russians' 250,000.

Russian gunners aim their gun at Austro-Hungarian positions around the town of Przemysl in October 1914. The Russian victory in the opening campaigns in Galicia enabled them to lay siege to this key fortress.

Trench warfare and technology

In the fighting along the Aisne in September 1914, the spade became as important a weapon of war as the rifle for the average infantryman. In part this was a deliberate decision by the German Chief of the General Staff, the recently appointed General Erich von Falkenhayn. He realized that the onus for offensive action was on the French, British and Belgians, who needed to evict the Germans from France and Belgium. He therefore put his armies in a defensive posture almost straightaway, which meant digging entrenchments and constructing wire and other types of obstacles. Subsequently, the French and British followed suit, not because they were intent on fighting a defensive war, but because the entrenchments offered better protection against artillery and snipers while offensive action was planned and prepared.

Hiram Maxim, the inventor of an automatic firearm, aims his Maxim gun. The ability to fire several hundred rounds a minute from a single weapon had a dramatic effect on warfare.

> “WAR EXPERIENCE IN BOTH THE BOER WAR OF 1899–1902 AND THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR OF 1904–05 HAD SHOWN THAT ARTILLERY FIRING SHRAPNEL SHELLS WAS NOT PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE AGAINST DUG-IN INFANTRY”

Von Falkenhayn's decision made perfect sense in the light of military understanding in 1914. All armies were aware that various technological developments, mostly concentrated in the second half of the nineteenth century, had changed infantry tactics significantly. The development of rifling, followed by reliable breech-loading mechanisms, magazines and smokeless powder meant that soldiers no longer needed to stand up to ram down a cartridge and bullet into a musket, were not enveloped in clouds of smoke when they fired – which meant they could see targets clearly for longer – and could achieve accurate fire at far longer ranges. Attacking forces, therefore, were subjected to enemy fire for a longer period, and frequently from an opponent who was invisible to them for much of the time, lying prone or in a trench, often with overhead cover.

The machine gun had most of these advantages and furthermore allowed the equivalent firepower of a platoon to be wielded by two or three men. Each German division had 24 machine guns, effectively increasing their firepower by an extra 24 platoons, or about 12 per cent. However, machine guns were not particularly mobile. In attack, they were utilized mainly as a relatively static support weapon, although they were more effective in defence, where there was less need for them to be mobile.

War experience in both the Boer War of 1899–1902 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05 had shown that artillery firing shrapnel shells was not particularly effective against dug-in infantry. When war came in 1914, shrapnel shells were still extensively used by artillery because they were so effective against infantry and cavalry in the open. The Germans had realized this at the start of the war and tactically deployed in defensive positions against the French attacks along their common border. Once dug in they did not suffer the level of casualties that French officers believed they would when subjected to rapid bombardment of shrapnel shells from the vaunted French 75mm gun.

Furthermore, almost all the combatants underestimated the need for heavier guns, especially howitzers that delivered the kind of plunging shellfire – often using high-explosive rounds – that was most effective against infantry in trenches. The British and French, however, had shown less foresight than the Germans and so particularly suffered from the German decision to dig in.

Tactical views on the correct way to conduct an infantry assault also played into the hands of those choosing to entrench their forces. It was apparent from the time of the American Civil War that in certain circumstances, infantry on the attack ought to move forward in rushes, preferably with supporting troops on the flanks firing at the defenders, forcing them to keep their heads down. What was true of armies still fighting with muzzle-loading muskets was even truer of armies equipped with breechloaders, as the Prussian troops found out in the Franco-

As the numerous used propellant containers show in this image of an US gun crew from 1918, field guns like the quick-firing French 75mm were able to fire many rounds accurately, because only the barrel recoiled, whereas the whole carriage of earlier weapons rebounded.

> "IT WAS APPARENT FROM THE TIME OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR THAT IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, INFANTRY ON THE ATTACK OUGHT TO MOVE FORWARD IN RUSHES, PREFERABLY WITH SUPPORTING TROOPS ON THE FLANKS"

Prussian War of 1870-71. The Boer War and the Russo-Japanese War only reinforced these lessons, emphasizing how much more effective modern firearms were.

However, this form of rushing assault ran contrary to the need to keep an infantry force under effective command. The fear was that without the officers being able to control the movements of their men, and without NCOs bringing up the rear enforcing discipline on any man hanging back, any attack would go to ground as soon as it came under fire, instead of closing on the enemy position and capturing it. The ordinary infantryman was not entrusted with the ability to summon up the will to fight, or with the skill to keep moving forward from cover to cover in the most effective way to achieve the objective.

All the armies entering the First World War planned to advance to the attack in "skirmish lines" - long lines of men placed from 1-5 yards (1-4½ m) apart, depending on the army. The idea was that such a thick formation would maintain a "density of firepower" that could overwhelm the defenders. In reality, it made good target practice as the French, who adopted the densest formations, found out in the war's opening battles.

Falkenhayn's recipe in the West, however, was not applied in the East to the same extent. Here was the key to the effects of technology on warfare in 1914, the explanation as to why trench warfare evolved on the Western Front, and why commanders believed that a "Big Push" offensive, applied correctly, would bring about a restoration of the mobile warfare that characterized the first six weeks of the war.

Trench warfare did occur on the Eastern Front, but it was invariably a transitional stage in the fighting. It normally occurred either around an important objective such as a town or city, or else on terrain that already offered advantages to the defender, as in the area between Gorlice and Tarnow, between two relatively open areas. The basic reason for this was the average frontage a division occupied in a quiet sector of the front line was 6 miles (10 km), whereas in the East it was 12 miles (20 km). It was far easier to punch through such a thinly held position. Trench warfare was only inevitable where the battlefield was as crowded as in France and Belgium. The fighting on the Eastern Front remained as the generals envisaged war being fought prior to the stalemate in the West, and as they believed it could be once the trench line was broken.

> "EACH GERMAN DIVISION HAD 24 MACHINE GUNS, EFFECTIVELY INCREASING THEIR FIREPOWER BY AN EXTRA 24 PLATOONS, OR ABOUT 12 PER CENT"

Field telephones were the only means of communicating with headquarters behind the lines, but were connected by fragile lines that could be disrupted by artillery barrages.

The British were forced to call up Royal Marine pensioners to make up the strength for reinforcements sent to Antwerp to help the Belgian army there resist a siege by the Germans.

Antwerp falls after siege

The German army occupied Antwerp on 10 October 1914. The fall of the city was followed by chaotic scenes as hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians attempted to escape to the Netherlands and France. A cloud of black smoke hangs over the port, after oil tanks were set alight by shelling.

The Belgian army had withdrawn into Antwerp, designated the National Redoubt, after the Germans captured Liège in August. The Germans had left a couple of corps to surround the city and in September the new Chief of the General Staff, General Erich von Falkenhayn, reinforced this with heavy guns and an additional division. A general bombardment of Antwerp began on 27 September and three days later the Germans began an assault aimed at breaching the first ring of forts and entrenchments that had been erected around the city. The Germans achieved early successes and the Belgians withdrew behind the River Nete.

In Britain, First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill was alarmed by these developments, and was given Cabinet permission to go to the city. He took with him men of the Royal Naval Division, as well as 6,000 other soldiers – 12,000 in total.

Only four days later, however, after the defences along the Nete had been forced, the Belgian government decided to evacuate the city and withdraw the bulk of its army to the north-eastern corner of the country, around Ostend. When the Germans started bombarding the city, the Belgians again began to pull back.

Turkey enters the war

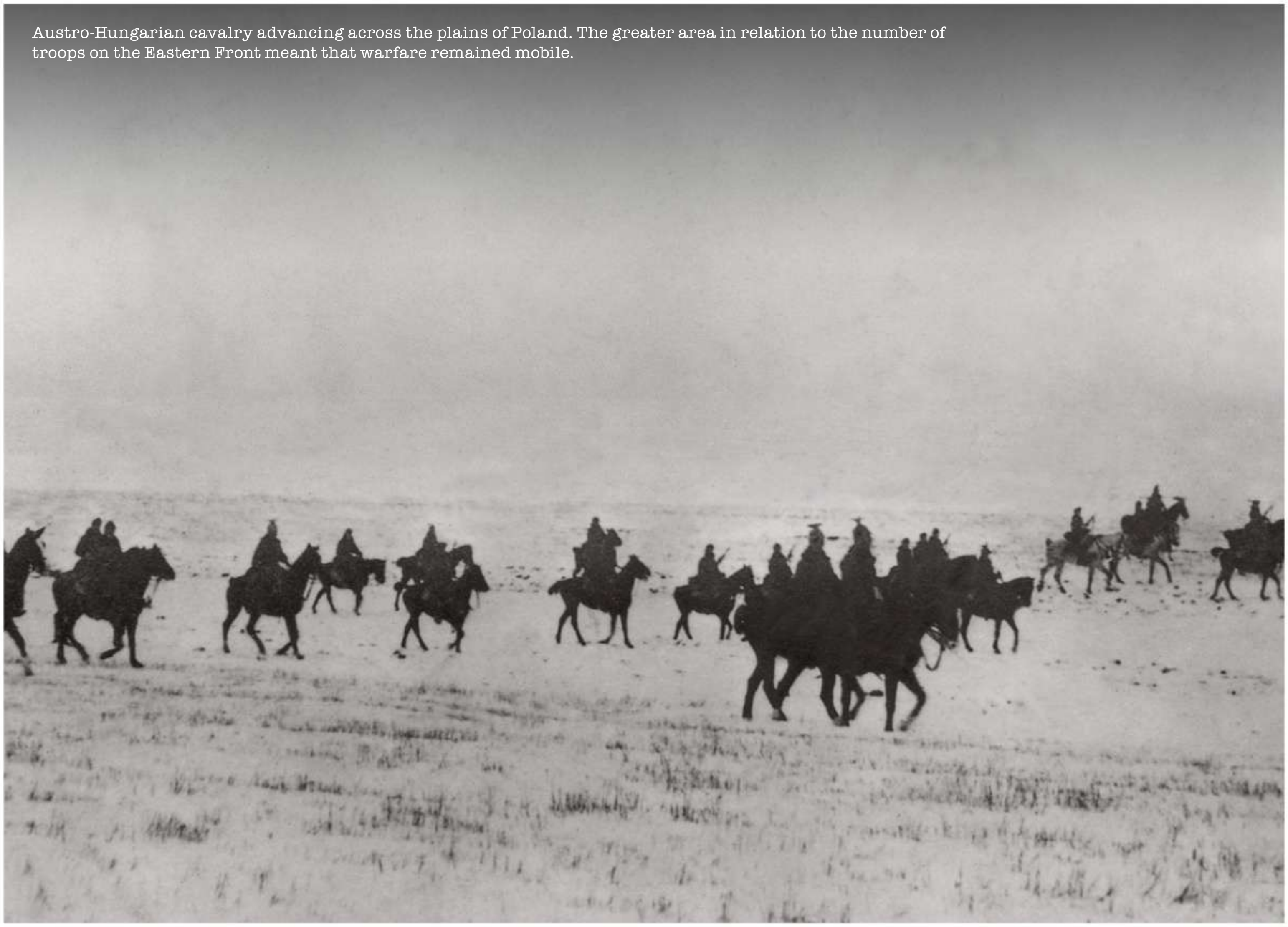
Turkey entered the war against the Allies on 29 October 1914. Turkey had received considerable investments from Germany in the years leading up to the war, most famously the "Berlin to Baghdad" railway. However, one of the biggest coups by the Germans was the transfer of two German vessels to the Turkish navy, making up for the seizure by Britain of two battleships being built in British yards.

The commander of the German Mediterranean squadron, Admiral Wilhelm Souchon, had been well aware of the tense European situation as it developed during July 1914, and had laid plans in keeping with his instructions to attack French bases in Algeria prior to a race into the North Atlantic with the intention of rejoining the German High Seas Fleet there. However, during the night of 3/4 August, Souchon received orders to sail for Turkey. Being already off the Algerian coast, Souchon opted to complete his planned shelling of French bases at Bona and Philippeville, before setting sail for Turkey. The British commander in the Mediterranean, Admiral Sir Archibald Berkeley Milne, was aware of the German movement, but in the first days of August it was still uncertain whether Britain would go to war with Germany – the British cabinet had not decided its policy even at the time of the German shelling of Algerian ports. However, it was assumed that war would come and British ships were assigned both to observe the Straits of Otranto (between Albania and Italy), from which Austro-Hungarian ships could reach the Mediterranean shipping lanes, and also the Goeben and Breslau, which were known to be a threat to the convoy routes between French North Africa and France.

The British divided their forces, and two battlecruisers went after the Germans while four smaller cruisers and accompanying destroyers observed the straits. The Admiralty in London concluded that the German ships would make their way to the Atlantic and ordered the battlecruisers to move at speed toward the Straits of Gibraltar. In so doing, they accidentally intercepted the two German ships now sailing east. The British, still not yet at war with Germany, began shadowing the German vessels. Souchon, on the Goeben, found himself in a difficult position because he would probably lose an action against the two battlecruisers, so he accelerated to 26 knots and evaded the British.

The Goeben and the British then played a cat-and-mouse game, although at times it was difficult to tell which was the cat. All the British vessels involved were weaker than the German vessel, but for two days pursued the Goeben vigorously. The commander of the British cruiser squadron eventually decided that he stood no chance against the Goeben, which in turn could do no effective damage to British interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, and turned back to the Straits of Otranto. The Goeben escaped to Turkey, arriving in Turkish waters on 11 August.

The German battlecruiser Goeben's flight to Turkey saved the ship from the futile gesture of an unwinnable confrontation against the far superior British Mediterranean fleet.



Austro-Hungarian cavalry advancing across the plains of Poland. The greater area in relation to the number of troops on the Eastern Front meant that warfare remained mobile.

Russians recover ground in Poland

On 27 October 1914, the chief of staff of German armies on the Eastern Front, General Erich Ludendorff, ordered his Ninth Army to withdraw from its advanced positions on the Vistula river in Russian Poland. This marks the end of the Central Powers' autumn campaign in Poland, with the Austro-Hungarians in Galicia already in retreat, and enables the Russians to retrieve much territory that they had surrendered only a few weeks before.

The Germans began their advance at the end of September, aware that the Russians had abandoned western Poland, which was surrounded on three sides by German and Austro-Hungarian territory at the outset of the war. The Austro-Hungarians were also due to advance northwards to relieve the siege of the fortress of Przemysl and regain both banks of the San river. However, by 9 October the Austro-Hungarian offensive had ground to a halt at the San itself.

The Russians were so confident that they could hold off the Austro-Hungarians that they withdrew three armies from the front and marched them to Warsaw and a line along the Vistula river. As they arrived, the Germans were approaching and some fierce fighting took place along the Vistula and around Ivangorod from 9 October with the Battle of Ivangorod continuing until 20 October. The Germans needed reinforcements, and took them from Ivangorod, with Austro-Hungarian troops replacing them in the line. These were defeated in short order by the Russians, and by 16 October the German army in front of Warsaw was threatened by the Russian advance. Two days later the Austro-Hungarians were in full retreat again as the Russians attacked along the San, and the Germans chose to withdraw from Warsaw, returning to their original positions of September after a renewed Russian attack on 26 October threatened their forces.

> “THE RUSSIANS WERE SO CONFIDENT THAT THEY COULD HOLD OFF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIANS THAT THEY WITHDREW THREE ARMIES FROM THE FRONT AND MARCHED THEM TO WARSAW”

Race to sea ends in draw

German forces face their French, British and Belgian counterparts the entire length of a line stretching from the North Sea to the Swiss border, after the Germans captured Ostend and Zeebrugge on 15 October 1914. The Belgian army has flooded the area around the Yser river, stopping any further advance westward, while French and British troops have been moved to cover major centres Ypres, Dixmude and La Basée.

The "race to the sea", as the campaign has become known, was started with an attempt to turn the flank of the German position along the Aisne by an attack by French troops in the area between Arras and Compiègne. The Germans countered this with a pincer attack on the northern part of this French attack, with advances north and south of Arras. In order to cover the flank of this manoeuvre, a mass of German cavalry advanced further north around Bethune, aiming to scythe down behind French lines toward Amiens.

Given this strategic situation, with some possibilities for manoeuvre, the British Expeditionary Force was transferred northwards from the Aisne front, to where it could be supplied more easily from the Channel ports, slotting into the line south of Bethune. At Ostend, another British force covered the withdrawal of the Belgian field army from Antwerp, which subsequently took up position along the Yser, to the east of Dunkirk. The only gap in the line now stood between Ypres and La Bassée.

Russian rumours in Britain

A false story has swept Britain this autumn about a mysterious Russian expeditionary force that supposedly arrived in Scotland in August. Some of those who claim to have seen the force say the men were speaking a foreign language and had "snow on their boots". The numbers reached astronomical levels for a force that no one has actually seen. The generally accepted figure is a quarter of a million and the rumour has even warranted comment in the humorous magazine Punch.

French soldiers occupy a trench. The attempts by both sides on the Western Front to outflank one another only created a line of trenches that cut like a scar across the French countryside.

British hold upper hand around Ypres

A German attempt to break the Allied lines at Ypres in Flanders was abandoned with the onset of bad weather on 22 November 1914. Both sides have suffered unexpectedly heavily in just over three months of continuous fighting in France.

The flat countryside of Flanders offered von Falkenhayn what appeared to be his best chance of achieving a significant victory. There was only a scattering of troops between the small Belgian army hugging the coast and the French forces in front of Lille. After the fall of Antwerp on 10 October, von Falkenhayn ordered two German armies to advance through here and reach the Channel ports of Dunkirk, Calais and Boulogne. The race was on between the Germans, attempting to thrust a large army through the gap and to the ports, and the French and British scrambling to plug the hole with troops drawn from other parts of the front.

By 22 October, the French and British had won the race, filling the gap with infantry. The main weight of the Prussian attack came at Ypres, where seven British infantry and three cavalry divisions, together with a similar number of French troops, faced two German armies amounting to some 24 divisions. However, eight of the German divisions were made up of reservists, student volunteers at the outbreak of war, who were badly trained, with officers called out of retirement and unfamiliar with the latest tactical thinking.

With such an advantage in numbers, the Germans believed they could achieve a breakthrough. The student volunteers were sent into action on 31 October, advancing in skirmish lines more appropriate to the Franco-Prussian War, with flags flying and singing “Deutschland über Alles”. They advanced into the rifle fire of professional British soldiers trained to fire 15 rounds a minute and were cut down as if they were walking into machine-gun fire. Where they did achieve their objectives, the British counter-attacks eventually drove them out.

The Germans made their last attempt at breaking the British line on 11 November, sending eight regiments of the Guard along the Menin Road. Just as the reservists suffered heavy casualties, so did the Guard, who similarly ignored the lessons of recent conflicts.

British soldiers dig a trench in muddy Flanders ground. After being churned up by an artillery bombardment, the soggy ground quickly turned into a quagmire during periods of heavy rain.

Britain’s first naval defeat of the century

Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock died in the Battle of Coronel, after challenging a much stronger German force on 1 November 1914.

Two British armoured cruisers were sunk by a stronger German squadron in a battle off the coast of Chile on 1 November 1914, representing the first British naval defeat since the Napoleonic period.

The German East Asiatic Squadron, consisting of two armoured cruisers and three light cruisers, had moved to the Marianas Islands prior to the outbreak of war, and on 14 August sailed east across the Pacific hoping to raid British shipping off South America. A British squadron consisting of two armoured cruisers, a light cruiser and a converted liner intercepted them off Coronel, Chile, on 1 November at around 4.30 p.m. Fighting began around 7 p.m. and accurate German gunfire quickly sank the two British cruisers.

German victory in East Africa

The German garrison of German East Africa defeated an attempt by the British Indian army to take control of the port of Tanga, an important seaport in the colony, forcing the British to withdraw on 5 November 1914. The British forces have suffered about a thousand casualties, to the Germans' 150.

The British landed 8,000 men from boats on 3 November, a few miles south of the city, but they had poor quality maps and did not reconnoitre the area. When they marched toward Tanga on 4 November they were ambushed by about a thousand German troops and brought to a halt. Skirmishing during the afternoon was periodically interrupted by attacks from swarms of angry bees.

The German counter-attack the next day drove the British troops back to their boats, leaving behind considerable amounts of weapons and ammunition, which were invaluable booty to the isolated German colonial force.

> “THE BRITISH FORCES HAVE SUFFERED ABOUT A THOUSAND CASUALTIES, TO THE GERMANS 150”

Japan captures Tsingtao

The German-leased port of Tsingtao, in China, surrendered to a predominantly Japanese force on 7 November 1914. The siege had lasted two months.

The Japanese sent a force of 23,000 men, heavily equipped with artillery, to besiege the town. A steady bombardment was maintained throughout the siege, with the Japanese very active in conducting night raids on the German defences and in using seaplanes to scout over the German positions, as well as dropping small bombs.

The Japanese assaulted the German defences on 7 November and once their lines had been broken, the Germans agreed to surrender the port and its garrison of 6,000 men.

British soldiers pass their Japanese allies as they come ashore at Tsingtao to help capture Germany's China treaty port in the autumn of 1914.

Russia and Germany claim victory

Both Russian and German generals claimed victory after their latest battle around the city of Lódz, which carried on after a German retreat on 24 November 1914. The German commander of the Eastern Front, General Paul von Hindenburg, has requested reinforcements from the Western Front in order to launch further offensive operations during the winter.

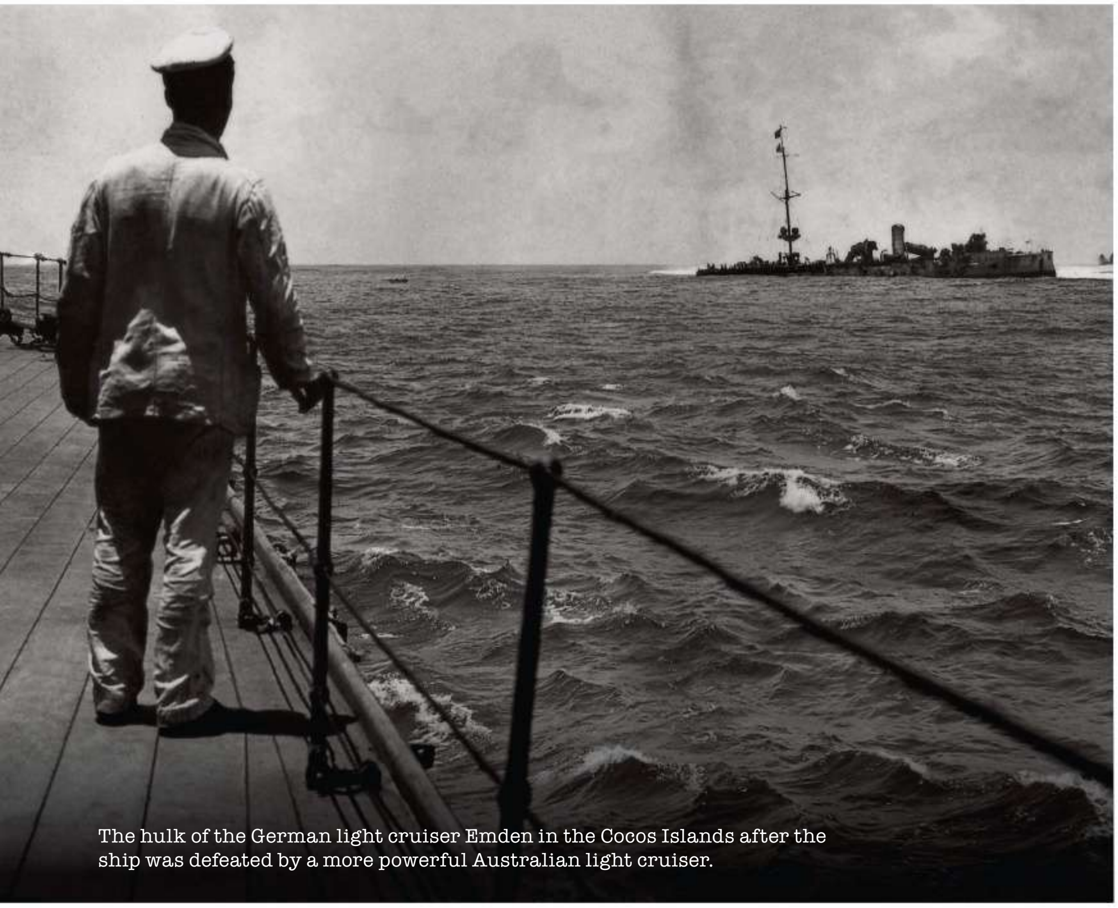
The Russian armies in central Poland, after securing Warsaw from a German attack in October, began advancing toward the German region of Silesia which has vital industrial resources. Von Hindenburg's chief of staff, General Erich Ludendorff, withdrew German troops from further south and sent them against the slowly advancing Russian armies on 11 November. One corps of the northernmost army was in an isolated position, and the Germans took advantage of this to defeat it before reinforcements could arrive. With a gap opened in the Russian line, the Germans streamed through it with the intention of capturing Warsaw. The flank of a second Russian corps was exposed by the retreat of the first and the Germans turned their attention on it as well, forcing it to retire.

Russian commanders were slow to react to, but when they did they managed to march rapidly to establish a strong defensive position at Lódz, an important supply centre for them. The Germans attempted to attack the city on 18 November, but instead found themselves in a position where they were about to be cut off by a Russian flank attack. Seeing the severity of the situation, they withdrew, taking with them many Russian prisoners. The Russians suffered total losses of 95,000 in these battles, to the Germans' 35,000.

A battalion of Russian soldiers on the march in the winter of 1914. Russian forces have abandoned their traditional defensive strategy and adopted an offensive one, that has so far brought them only serious defeats at the hands of the Germans.

Commerce raider sunk

The German light cruiser Emden was destroyed off the Cocos Islands by the Australian cruiser HMAS Sydney on 9 November 1914. The Emden had cruised the Indian Ocean after parting company with the associated ships of the German East Asiatic Squadron in the Marianas on 14 August. Between 10 September and 28 October, the Emden captured or sank 25 Allied ships, the last two ships being a Russian cruiser and a French destroyer in Penang harbour, as well as shelling oil installations at Madras in India, . The Emden often disguised her appearance by means of a false funnel, which made her resemble a British vessel.



The hulk of the German light cruiser Emden in the Cocos Islands after the ship was defeated by a more powerful Australian light cruiser.

British invade Mesopotamia, hold Basra

An expeditionary force drawn from the British Indian army occupied Basra on 22 November 1914 after a siege lasting two weeks. The expedition is an attempt to attack Turkey from the Persian Gulf, hoping to take advantage of Arab nationalism, and also to protect Britain's vital petroleum industry investments in Persia.

The British had anticipated Turkey's entry into the war on 29 October, having dispatched 7,000 troops from Bombay in mid-month. On 7 November a portion of this force landed on the Fao peninsula. The British had won support from a local sheikh, who supplied intelligence of the Turkish military movements in return for a bribe, thus enabling the British to counter an attempt by the Turks to push them off the peninsula.

With the support of a flotilla of gunboats, the British succeeded in forcing the evacuation of Turkish troops from Basra, and have now secured control of the Shatt al-Arab estuary after driving the Turks away from the vital oil refinery at Abadan.

OBITUARY

Lord Roberts (1832–1914)

Lord Roberts, the last commander-in-chief of the British army, has died of pneumonia after visiting troops at St Omer.

Lord Roberts was the most highly regarded general of the Victorian era, having led British forces to success in Afghanistan and during the Boer War, being showered with honours as a result. He won the Victoria Cross during the Indian Mutiny and in 1901 became commander-in-chief of the British army. After he retired in 1904, the post was abolished and replaced by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

He was granted an earldom in 1901, which has been allowed to pass to his surviving daughter, his only son having been killed in action during the Boer War.

> “HE WAS THE MOST HIGHLY REGARDED GENERAL OF THE VICTORIAN ERA”

Falklands victory

On 8 December 1914, the odyssey of the German East Asiatic Squadron came to an end off the Falkland Islands when four of its five ships were sunk in combat with two British battlecruisers. The victory of the German East Asiatic Squadron over the British West Indies squadron at Coronel in November 1914 had come as a shock to the Royal Navy. Two powerful battlecruisers were therefore sent to the South Atlantic to find the German squadron and destroy it. Meanwhile, the commander of the German ships, Admiral Graf Maximilian von Spee, planned a raid on the Falkland Islands, a British colony where a coaling station and a radio station were situated. As von Spee's ships neared the islands, they sighted the telltale tripod mast of a British capital ship – the British battlecruisers were coaling at Port Stanley, a coincidence that was to prove fatal to von Spee's ships.

Unable to outrun the faster British vessels, the German warships came under fire at about 1.00 p.m., after a three-hour chase. The two German armoured cruisers were sunk first, then the two light cruisers. Nearly 2,000 German sailors, including von Spee and both of his sons, were lost in the battle; the British losses were just 29.

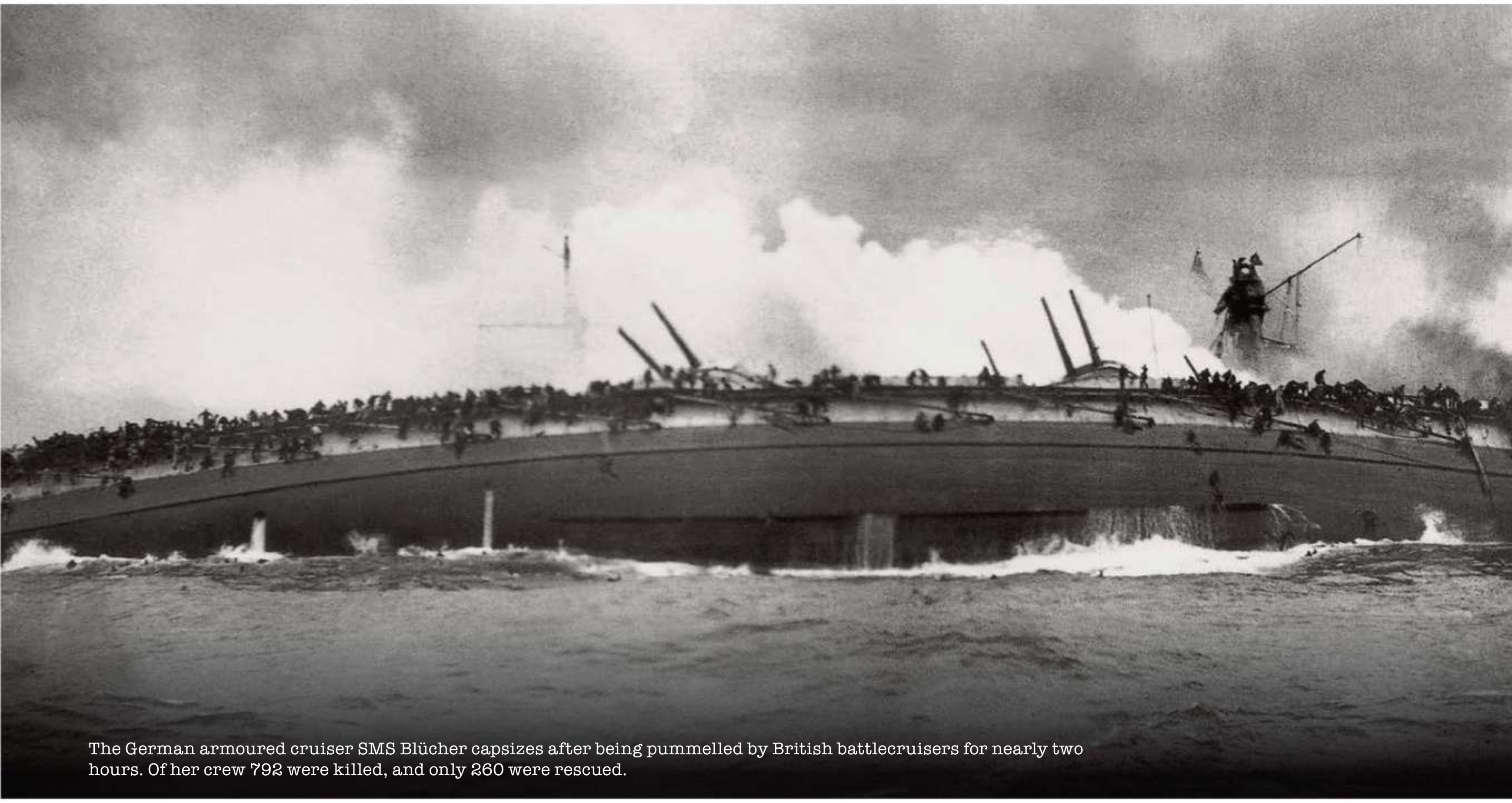
HMS Invincible picks up the few survivors from the defeated German East Asiatic Squadron, which was sunk in an engagement in December 1914. Only 215 German sailors survived.

Friendship in the front line

Troops on the Western Front have spent some of the Christmas holiday period fraternizing with the enemy. German, British and, in rare instances, even French troops declared local truces and even exchanged whatever gifts they could with one another. Impromptu football matches are reported to have been played.

Most of the truces occurred in the area around Ypres in Belgium. Shouted Christmas greetings and the singing of carols preceded troops from both sides getting out of their trenches and walking into no-man's-land to visit their enemy. German troops placed candles on small pine trees and put these along the parapets of their trenches. Soldiers also used these truces to bury the dead who had been left lying out in the open, and both sides mourned and prayed for the fallen. There were some instances where individuals appeared to be trying to get a better view of their opponents' entrenchments, but these were discouraged in a respectful manner in order to avoid any possibility of fighting suddenly breaking out. The truces for the most part started on Christmas Eve and continued throughout Christmas Day, although some extended to the New Year.

British and German soldiers greet one another on Christmas Day 1914. The truce was not uniform across the front, but was widespread.



The German armoured cruiser SMS Blücher capsizes after being pummelled by British battlecruisers for nearly two hours. Of her crew 792 were killed, and only 260 were rescued.

Intelligence the key at Dogger Bank

On 24 January 1915, British ships from the Grand Fleet engaged a smaller German squadron from the High Seas Fleet. The Battle of the Dogger Bank originally started as a raid by the German warships, which had successfully bombarded ports on England's east coast in December. British naval intelligence intercepted and decoded German signals advising ships of the impending raid, and Vice Admiral David Beatty sailed out to meet the enemy. Once the German commander, Admiral Franz von Hipper, saw the more powerful British squadron off the Dogger Bank, he turned his ships to withdraw, but after a two-hour chase, the British came within range and both sides exchanged gunfire. Two German ships were damaged, as was the British flagship, which came to a halt. Beatty tried to order the rest of his ships to continue pursuing the Germans, but this was confused and the British ships concentrated on a damaged German ships, SMS Blücher. While the Blücher was being sunk the rest of the German ships escaped.

IN BRIEF

• An Austro-Hungarian offensive into Serbia, launched on 8 November 1914, came to an ignominious end on 15 December, when the Austro-Hungarians give up all of their gains and allowed Belgrade to be reoccupied by Serbian forces.

• German warships bombarded the British towns of Scarborough, Whitby and Hartlepool on 16 December 1914. The raid resulted in the death of 122 civilians in total and damage to buildings in all three places.

• British Imperial forces began an invasion of the German colony of South-West Africa. On 25 December 1914, Walvis Bay, on the coast, was occupied by units from the Dominion of South Africa and Rhodesian colonies. The decision to invade was a controversial one in South Africa, where the Boers had received support from Germany during their war with the British. In September 1914 there had been a brief rebellion by the Boers against the decision to invade the colony, and martial law was proclaimed in parts of the dominion. The rebellion ended on 28 December.

• Great Yarmouth, Sheringham and King's Lynn were all bombed on 19 January 1915 by German zeppelins. These raids were authorized personally by Kaiser Wilhelm II, the German emperor, earlier in the month. Four people were killed and buildings were damaged.

Ethnic cleansing

At the end of December 1914, the Turkish Third Army attacked Russian forces in Russian Armenia. Enver Pasha, the Minister of War and a member of the triumvirate that provided the effective government of Turkey, took personal charge of this force. His initial target was the town of Sarikamis and he divided his army as it marched toward the objective, expecting the two columns to arrive simultaneously. They did not, however, and the Russian defenders defeated each of these forces separately, preventing the Turks from taking advantage of their numerical superiority. The Turks faced a difficult winter retreat and at least half the army died during the march or in the fighting.

One of the organizers of the crime against the Armenians in Turkey was Kouzi Bey, seated at the table second from the left, here having a drink with some officers of his country's German allies, in a photograph published in a French newspaper.

The defeat was a tremendous embarrassment for Enver Pasha so he looked for a scapegoat, and found one in the Armenians. The Armenians, who were concentrated around the border with Russia in eastern Turkey, shared a Christian faith with the Russians, who made every effort to emphasize this shared heritage as they planned an invasion for the spring.

On 18 February 1915, Enver Pasha ordered all ethnic Armenian troops in the Turkish army to be assigned to labour battalions. It was the beginning of what was later described as the Armenian Genocide. Gradually the Turkish authorities tackled what they perceived as an "Armenian problem". In March 1915, Armenians were evacuated from the important port of Dörtyol on the Mediterranean coast. In April, the governor of Van province, Jevet Bey, who was also brother-in-law to Enver Pasha, executed five Armenian community leaders, at about the same time as a revolt of Armenians broke out in the province. To this day, historians debate whether the leaders were executed in an attempt to head off the revolt, or whether the Turks were implementing a plan to remove ethnic Armenians from Anatolia. Whatever the motives, the effect of Turkish policies was the wholesale destruction of the Armenian community in the Turkish Empire.

Kurdish troops were given a free hand against Armenians and killed the men wholesale. The Armenian labour battalions suffered a terrible rate of attrition as they carried out tasks assigned them by the Moslem authorities. Hundreds of the Armenian intelligentsia were arrested and were allegedly executed.

The Turkish government went further in May. At the end of the month, an order was issued forcing the evacuation of Armenians from all of Anatolia, except the Aegean coast, these people being sent to concentration camps in the deserts of Syria and Mesopotamia. No attempt was made to provide these displaced people with adequate

Hungry Armenian children await the distribution of food at a camp in northern Syria. The Turks did not kill masses of Armenians outright, but transported them to camps where they starved.

Victims of the Bosnian genocide. Bosnian Moslems and Croats were subjected to systematic murder and starvation by Bosnian Serbs between 1992 and 1995.

care during the arduous journey, or even after they had arrived at their new camps. There were widespread accusations of robbery, rape and murder by the guards, many of whom were members of the Special Organization, made up of prisoners released on government orders. If Armenians were not rebelling before these policies were adopted, they were certainly ready to revolt afterwards, and did so in towns such as Edessa.

The exact total of victims is also subject to debate. Although Turkish sources named figures ranging from 200,000 to 600,000, other historians estimate between 1 million and 1.5 million. Whether as a matter of deliberate policy, or as a result of suppressing rebellious activity, the Armenian community of eastern Anatolia was effectively removed from the region during the First World War.

Without doubt, in the past, massacre was a standard practice of Turkish repression of rebellion. In 1876, 15,000 Bulgarians were massacred after they had attempted to assert their independence, an action that ultimately led to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 after which the Russians began agitating for Armenian rights. This Bulgarian massacre shocked the other great powers of Europe at the time, as well as the United States. In 1903, Macedonians were massacred after an uprising, although estimates of the dead were much lower, around 7,000, than in the case of the Bulgarians or the Armenians. The Armenians themselves had been victims of massacres in 1896, after a terrorist raid on the Turkish Bank in Istanbul in August 1896. Armenian political organizations were repressed, and somewhere between 80,000 and 300,000 Armenians were murdered at the order of the Turkish Sultan of the time. Further massacres of Armenians took place in 1909, after the coup that had brought Enver Pasha to power led to demands for more liberty and autonomy; another 15,000 to 30,000 died.

The coup was a nationalist one and Islam was identified as a key element of the empire under Enver Pasha's regime. According to those who support the idea that the Turks were engaged in a genocide of the Armenians, the aim of Turkish policies at the time was to remove the Armenians altogether from Turkish territory, by the simple expedients of forced relocation and death. The Turks were not the first to implement such policies, nor would they be the last. The United States' government had forcibly moved several Indian tribes from south-eastern and mid-western states to an Indian territory on the Great Plains. This would be home to tribes from across the country, regardless of their native habitats which had such a deep influence on American Indian culture. Others were restricted to reserved territories closer to home, such as in the Dakota territories or Arizona and New Mexico, during the later nineteenth century. Hitler used the example of the Armenians to justify his own intentions toward the Jews, in his acrid comment in August 1939 about no-one now remembering the Armenians any more. In Rwanda, as in the Balkans of the 1990s, "ethnic cleansing" eradicated groups who were inconveniently on the wrong side of a border. Today, the UN Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide, agreed in 1948, established a standard under which individuals such as Enver Pasha can be brought to account for their crimes.

> “THE EXACT TOTAL OF VICTIMS IS ALSO SUBJECT TO DEBATE. ALTHOUGH TURKISH SOURCES NAMED FIGURES RANGING FROM 200,000 TO 600,000, OTHER HISTORIANS ESTIMATE BETWEEN 1 MILLION AND 1.5 MILLION”

Russians fend off Austro-Hungarians and Germans

Two winter offensives on the Eastern Front have forced the Austro-Hungarians and Germans to fight in harsh winter conditions, and both have failed to deal a knockout blow against Russia. It is the first significant setback to the wartime career of German General Erich Ludendorff, the prime mover of the campaign.

One offensive was directed at the Russian armies in East Prussia, while the other was a drive from the Carpathians to break the Russian blockade of the important fortress of Przemysl, which had been under siege since September, apart from a month's hiatus in October. The Austro-Hungarian attacks started on 23 January 1915, but the winter weather and difficult terrain slowed their advance so that by 5 February they had more or less ground to a halt, and it was the Russians' turn to attack in the Carpathians. The Austro-Hungarians resumed their attacks on 17 February, in the hope of reaching Przemysl, but these failed and in mid-March the garrison finally surrendered.

The German offensive in East Prussia began on 7 February when both the Germans and the Russians had to battle through a snowstorm. The bad weather reduced the effectiveness of the attack, but once the weather abated on 10 February the Germans made great gains, including the destruction of a corps – some 56,000 men – until a Russian counter-attack on 21 February brought the offensive to an end.

French dead on German barbed wire. The French suffered heavy casualties, and owed any gains to a considerable superiority in numbers.

Futility in the Champagne

A French offensive against the German-held Sayon salient in the eastern Champagne was called off on 17 March 1915, after they had suffered an estimated 90,000 casualties. General Joseph Joffre had hoped that an advance of about 50 miles (80 km) would cut an important railway line that supplied German forces between Thionville and Valenciennes. With the massive French bombardment on the German trenches having little effect on the German machine-gun emplacements, the massed French infantry assaults soon ground to a halt after an advance of barely 2 miles (3 km).

A new era: unrestricted submarine warfare

On 4 February 1915, the German emperor, Wilhelm II, declared the seas around the British Isles to be a war zone, and that any shipping found there would be sunk without warning by submarines of the German navy as from 18 February 1915.

German submarines, known as U-boats, had already achieved a number of successes during the war. Being able to attack warships on sight enabled U-9 to sink no fewer than three Royal Navy armoured cruisers, the Aboukir, Hogue and Cressy, on 22 September 1914. They also began attacking merchantmen in October 1914, following the accepted practice of commerce raiding by boarding a vessel and enabling the crew to escape in lifeboats before sinking her. The first such incidents occurred off the coast of Norway.

However, this kind of conduct was not practical around the British Isles, where many warships were able to patrol from nearby ports. In order to take advantage of the submarine's ability to conceal itself underwater, German admirals therefore decided it was necessary to sink ships in the war zone on sight.

Action at Aubers Ridge

On 13 March 1915, Field Marshal Sir John French called off his attack on Aubers Ridge after three days of heavy fighting, during which the British captured several German trenches, with about 13,000 casualties on both sides.

The British attack had originally been part of a combined offensive with the French, who were to assault Vimy Ridge, while the British moved against Aubers Ridge. It was hoped that the two operations would force the Germans back from Noyon, but the heavy casualties the French had suffered around the Sayon salient prevented them from carrying out their part of the plan. In spite of this, General French continued to press ahead.

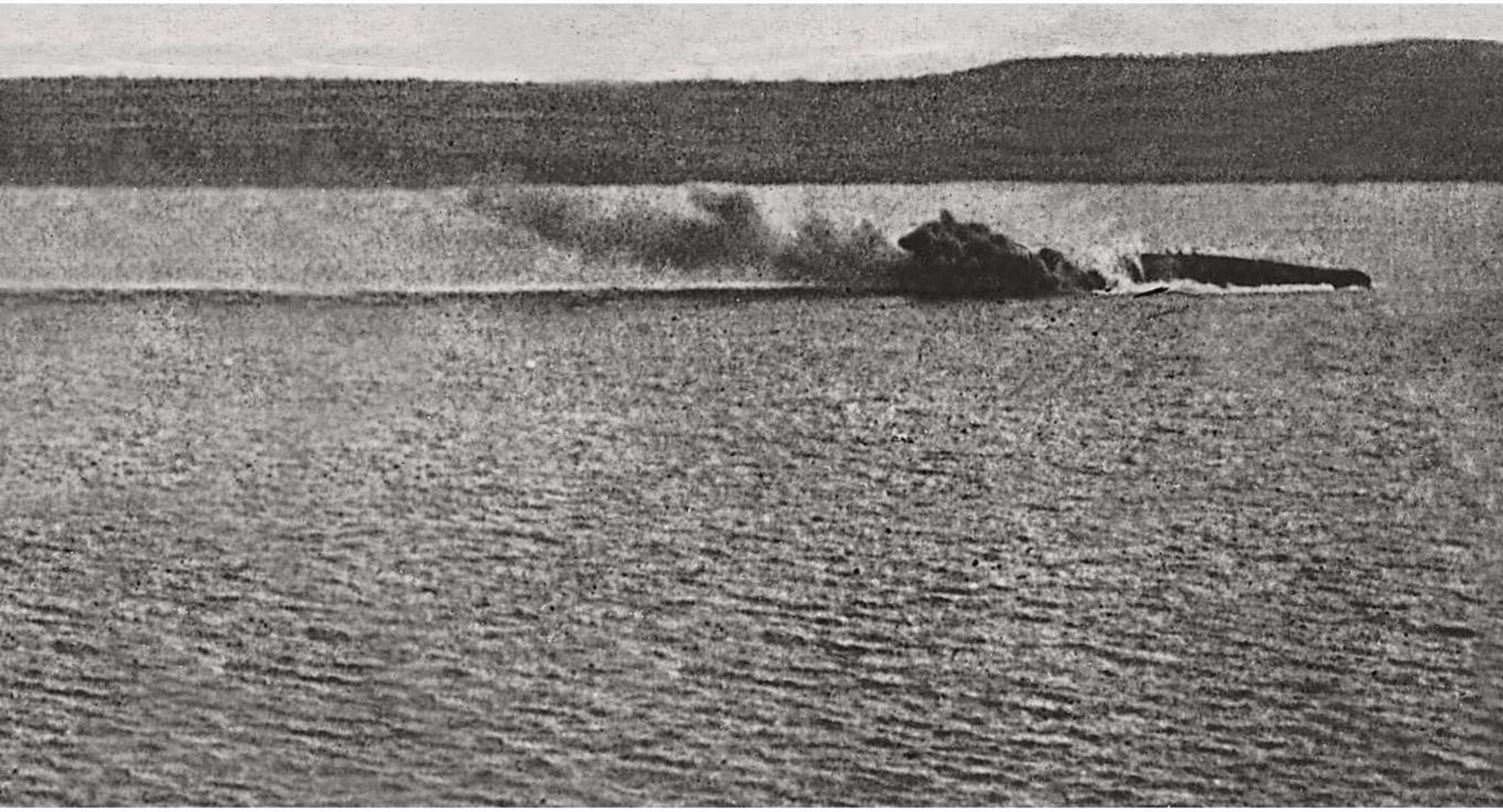
The British gambled on a heavy barrage before their advance on a very narrow front. The three German battalions defending the trench line were confronted by 14 British ones and the attack was launched after a 35-minute barrage on 10 March. Although it was initially highly successful, the Germans rushed reinforcements forward. Not being used to the conditions of trench warfare, advancing across torn-up ground and having to form up to take a second line of trenches after securing the first caused fatal delays for the British.

FIRST BATTLE OF CHAMPAGNE

DATES:	December 1914–March 1915
COMBATANTS:	France vs Germany
CASUALTIES:	France, 90,000; Germany, 20,000
RESULT:	German victory

Guns in the Dardanelles

On 18 March 1915, an Anglo-French fleet attempted to force a passage of the Dardanelles in Turkey, hoping to destroy the forts on either side of the straits and sail into the Sea of Marmara, prior to an attack on the Turkish capital, Constantinople. However, the operation ended in failure after four warships struck mines that had been laid by the Turks only ten days before.



The French battleship Bouvet sinks after it had struck a mine on 18 March 1915. The sinking resulting in the loss of almost her entire crew.

Australian troops disembark from longboats at Anzac Cove on the Gallipoli peninsula. Landing at the wrong place, they could not advance as aggressively inland as they might have liked.

Allied troops land at Gallipoli

British Imperial forces and French troops landed on the Gallipoli peninsula on 25 April 1915. The campaign is intended to knock Turkey out of the war, give Allied forces control of the Dardanelles and open a year-round supply line to Russia.

The landings were made at two places on the peninsula. At Cape Helles, British troops landed at five separate beaches on the tip of the peninsula, while soldiers from Australia and New Zealand went ashore at so-called Anzac Cove, on the western coast of the Gallipoli peninsula, just over 10 miles (16 km) away. From here the Anzacs were to advance across the narrow peninsula and both prevent the Turkish forces at the southern tip from retreating, and also prevent them being reinforced.

The landings on both beaches were difficult affairs. At Cape Helles the British had mixed fortunes – they were successful on the flanks, but the main landings at V and W beaches resulted in heavy loss of life, with the landing forces suffering between 60 and 70 per cent casualties. The Anzacs landed further north than planned and had to race for the high ground overlooking the cove, against Turkish troops being rushed forward to drive them into the sea. The Turks won the race, although they were unable to drive any of the invaders back into the sea.

DARDANELLES & GALLIPOLI

DATES:	February 1915–January 1916
COMBATANTS:	British Imperial forces and France vs Turkey
CASUALTIES:	Britain Imperial forces and France, 214,000; Turkey, 300,000
RESULT:	Turkish victory

Predatory pilot captured

Frenchman Roland Garros, a pre-war aviator, was captured on 18 April 1915 by German troops after his aircraft had to crash-land behind German lines. Garros developed a set of deflector blades that enabled him to mount a machine gun on the front of his plane and fire forward to shoot down enemy aircraft. The bullets, instead of shooting off part of the propellor blade, bounced off the deflectors instead, enabling Garros to shoot down three German aircraft, the first on 1 April 1915.

> “THE BULLETS, INSTEAD OF SHOOTING OFF PART OF THE PROPELLOR BLADE, BOUNCED OFF THE DEFLECTORS INSTEAD, ENABLING GARROS TO SHOOT DOWN THREE GERMAN AIRCRAFT”

Roland Garros created a system of deflectors allowing him to fire through the propellor arc.

Germans employ poison gas

Casualties of a gas attack rest at a hospital behind the lines. The use of chlorine gas surprised Allied defenders at Ypres, but the aggressive tactics of the 1st Canadian Division averted a major breakthrough.

German forces used chlorine gas against French colonial troops in the Ypres sector of the Western Front on 22 April 1915. The gas resulted in breathing troubles or blindness to the troops affected, causing death in many cases. Some 5,000 troops died as a result of this attack, opening a gap in the Allied lines 4 miles (6½ km) wide. The Germans' success was so unexpected that in the end it proved to be advantageous to the Allies. The 1st Canadian Division that rushed to replace the French troops soon realized that the enemy's lines were uncontaminated and decided that they would be safer fighting there than in the old French trenches. After soaking their handkerchiefs in urine – the ammonia of which negated the effects of chlorine – the Canadians used them as crude respirators and advanced, with heavy casualties, to capture German positions.

This was not the first time the Germans have used poison gas in the war – on 31 January 1915 they fired chemical shells against Russian positions, but cold temperatures on the day rendered the gas ineffective.

Crucified Canadian rumour circulates

Canadian soldiers are saying that one of their comrades has been "crucified" to a tree or barn door by German soldiers using bayonets to pin him up by his arms and legs. The incident is alleged to have occurred on 24 April 1915, and it has been asserted that the victim was a Harry Banks. The first eyewitness account described the incident as occurring near St Julien, in the Ypres area, but no crucified body has yet been discovered.

Turks routed in Mesopotamia

The British have won a victory at Shaiba, in Mesopotamia, over Turkish forces defending the region between Basra and Baghdad after a three-day battle ending on 14 April 1915.

The British campaign in Mesopotamia originally had the limited objective of protecting British oil installations in Persia, although it was too far from the main centres of the Turkish Empire to be a decisive region in the war. However, the victory at Basra came so easily that the British decided that it would be a simple task to advance to Baghdad.

On 9 April, General Sir John Nixon arrived at Basra to take command of the British forces in Mesopotamia. He had his plans, but the Turks decided to strike first. Using hordes of Arab irregulars to support some regular regiments, the Turks attacked on the night of 11 April. The British lines held and the Turks planned a withdrawal after two days of fighting. On the third day, however, the British cavalry attacked, catching the Turks and their irregular allies unawares, causing them to retreat in some confusion.

Boats carry British artillery along the Euphrates river.

Lusitania sunk, 1,195 lost

The last known photograph of the Lusitania, a Cunard liner carrying war munitions when she was torpedoed by the U-20.

The British liner RMS Lusitania was sunk by a German submarine off the Old Head of Kinsale on 7 May 1915. The Germans claim the ship was a legitimate military target; the British insist that it was not.

The Lusitania left New York on 1 May and arrived off the coast of Ireland on 7 May, where it was sighed by the German submarine U-20. The commander of the U-20, Walter Schweiger, ordered the firing of a torpedo in accordance with Germany's declaration of a war zone around the British Isles, making all ships legitimate targets for German warships. After the torpedo exploded, a second explosion occurred. It is not clear what this explosion was, although the Lusitania was carrying over 4 million rifle rounds and many cases of shrapnel shells and fuses. Among the dead was American motivational author Elbert Hubbard. Only 774 out of almost 2,000 passengers and crew survived.

Ammunition shortage halts attack

While a British offensive at Aubers Ridge near Arras on 9 May 1915 ground to a halt due to a shortage of artillery shells, a French attack at Vimy Ridge on the same day succeeded in attaining limited objectives thanks to better support from their guns.

The 40-minute British bombardment began an hour after sunrise, German machine guns scythed down whole lines of advancing troops and the lack of high-explosive shells resulted in the German barbed-wire entanglements not being breached. After 20 minutes, most of the attacking force lay trapped in no-man's-land. The British attempted to retrieve the situation with several artillery bombardments and a second attack was made in the afternoon, but also failed with heavy casualties. On 10 May an attempt to renew the attack was abandoned owing to a further shortage of shells. The French attack at Vimy gained its initial objectives, but could get no further.

> “THE FRENCH ATTACK AT VIMY GAINED ITS INITIAL OBJECTIVES”

German officers reconnoitre enemy trenches from a house in the spring of 1915. German officers led their army with great efficiency at all levels of command.

IN BRIEF

In 1915, the Germans introduced a system enabling a machine gun mounted on an aircraft to fire through the propellers' blades without hitting them. Designed by Anthony Fokker and based on Franz Schneider's work, the technique was first used successfully on the Western Front on 1 August 1915, when Lieutenant Max Immelmann forced down a British aircraft while flying his Fokker E.1 monoplane.

The German Fokker E.1 monoplane, armed with a single Spandau machine gun.

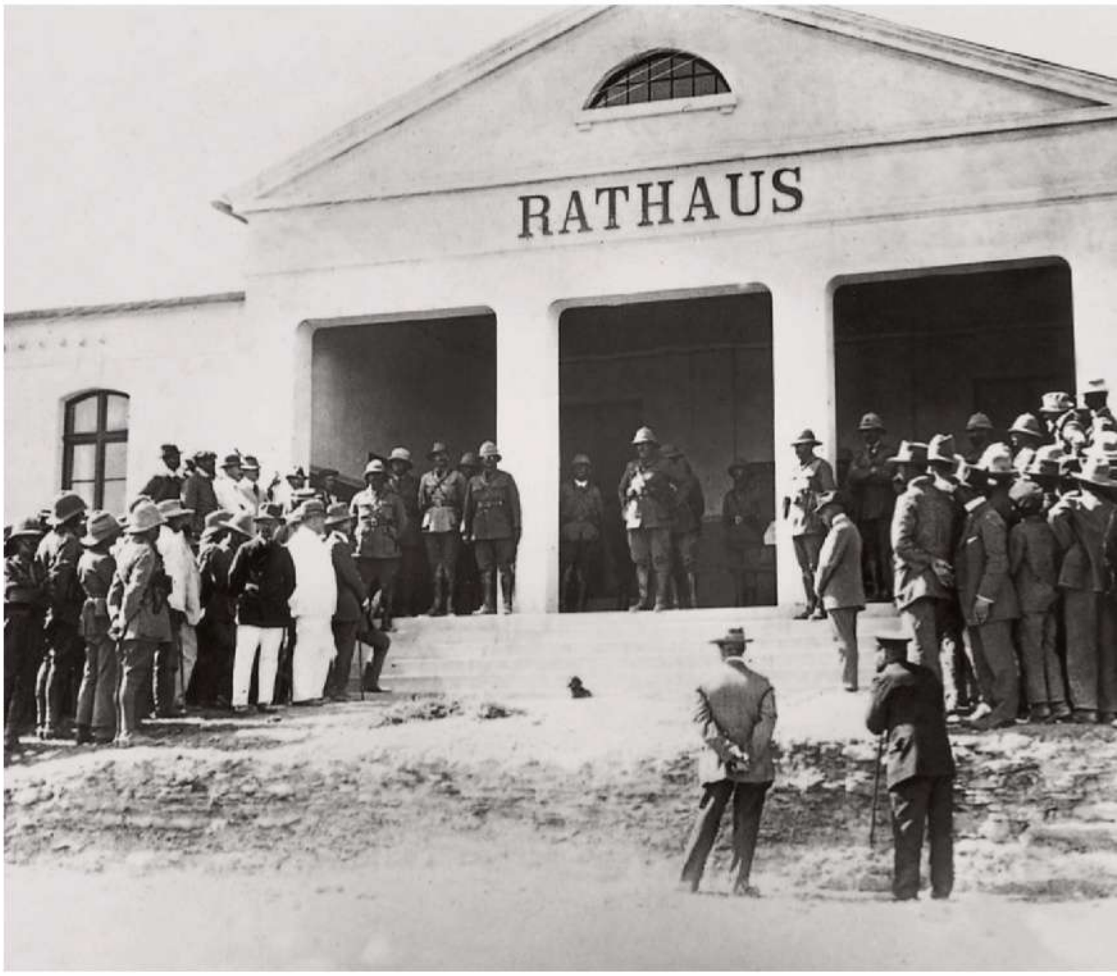
German South-West Africa campaign

British Imperial forces completed the conquest of German South-west Africa on 9 July 1915 with the signing of a truce between the German military and civil administration, and the South African commanding the British Imperial force, General Louis Botha.

At first, the German defenders had proved successful against South African probes and had even captured the British colony at Walvis Bay on 10 September 1914. But when British forces were beaten at Sandfontein on 26 September, a rebellion by Boers in South Africa put a halt to operations in the German colony.

While the Germans believed that the Namib deserts would prevent South African military forces from mounting an effective attack on the colony from the south, the South Africans had been aware of this problem and had made provision for a regular supply of water to their soldiers, by means of rebuilding the railway destroyed by the Germans. They also developed existing wells to provide more water. The South Africans were ready by late March and began their advance, forcing the Germans to retreat in the face of superior numbers.

The main South African effort was made from Walvis Bay, which was recaptured on Christmas Day 1914. Supply problems, in this case of both food and water, delayed the South African advance until late April. The Germans did not have a sufficiently strong force to resist a co-ordinated advance and retired, more in hope than with any serious prospect of success. The colony's capital, Windhoek, and its powerful radio transmitter, part of a global network that broadcast German news to the world, fell on 12 May 1915, and in the end the Germans surrendered without fighting a major battle.



General Louis Botha formally takes possession of the city hall at Windhoek, the capital of the German South-West Africa colony.

No gain at Vimy Ridge and estubert

French and British attacks at Vimy Ridge and Festubert achieved mixed results, the British operation finishing on 25 May, the French on 18 June. After a four-day bombardment, British and Indian troops went over the top shortly before midnight on 15 May. They made some rapid initial gains, but the Germans then withdrew to a new position some 1,200 yards (1,100 m) behind their original front line. This new line held firm against the initial British attacks. The battle then petered out into more limited attacks aimed at making the new Allied line more defensible. A simultaneous attempt by the French to take Vimy Ridge ended with 100,000 casualties – all for little gain.

Gallipoli

On 21 August 1915, British forces halted offensive operations around Suvla Bay, an abortive assault landing there two weeks earlier having failed to capture the high ground overlooking the beachhead. After four months of campaigning, the British and French have little to show for their daring operation against the Turks on the Gallipoli peninsula.

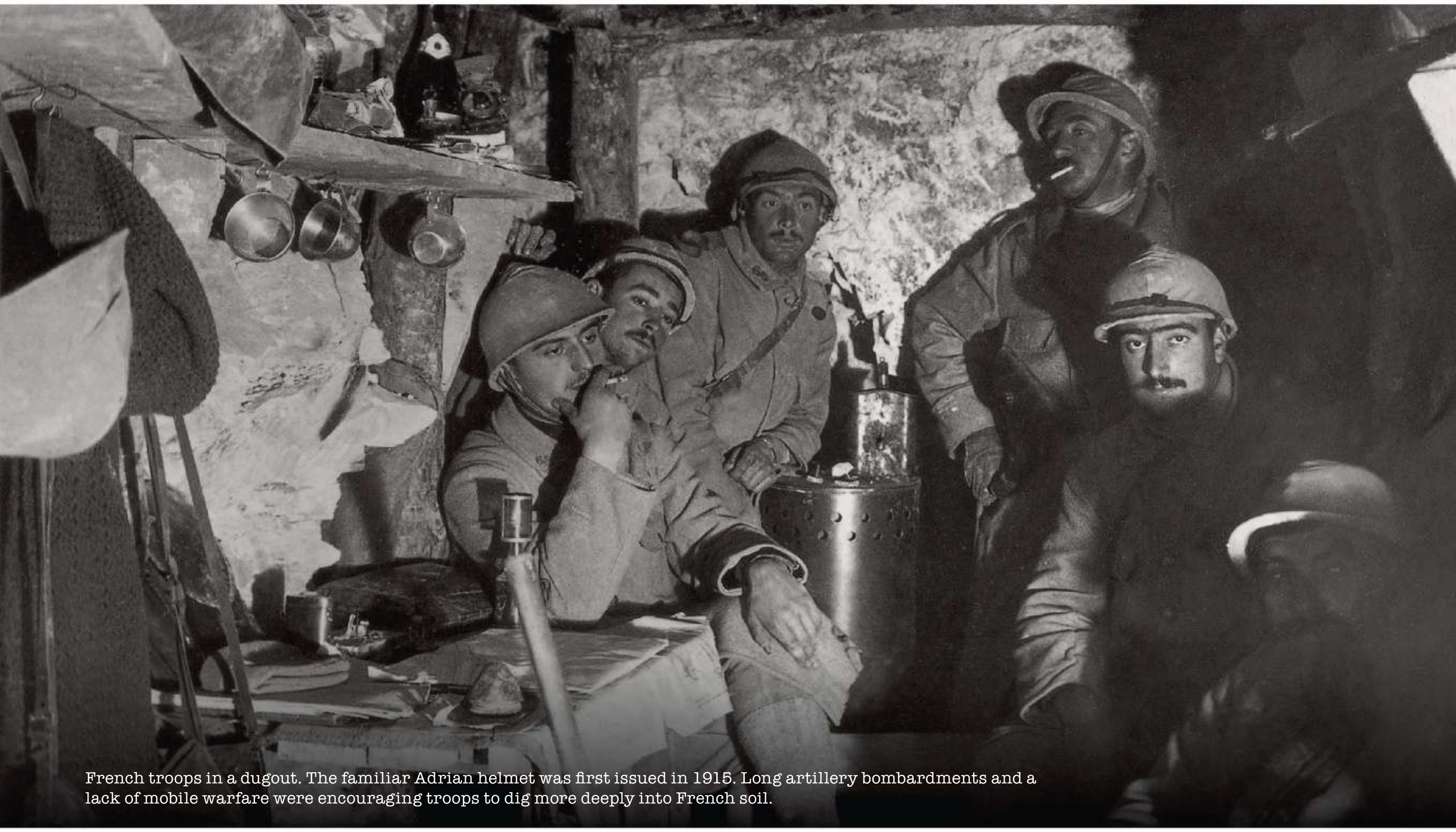
Following the April landings, the British tried several times to break through the Turkish lines, but in each case the attacks failed to achieve any kind of breakthrough. One initial target was the village of Krithia, to the north of the main British landing site at Cape Helles. British patrols came within 500 yards (460 m) of the village on the day of the initial landings, but further attempts on 6-8 May and 4-6 June got nowhere near this distant objective. The best results came in the June attack when the advance totalled 1,000 yards (920 m), but these attacks resulted in between 25 and 50 per cent casualties.

After a last attempt on Achi Baba Nullah, operations from Helles ceased, and the Suvla Bay landings were planned.

Suvla Bay was to the north of the initial landings. By sending troops there and seizing the heights around the bay, the British commander, General Sir Ian Hamilton, hoped either to weaken the Turks opposing the beachheads at Helles and Anzac Cove as they redeployed to face the new threat, or even to trap Turkish forces altogether. However, the 61-year-old commander on the spot, Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Stopford, was concerned about attacking without artillery support, even though few Turkish troops were present. Instead of pressing forward to capture and hold the high ground, he kept his men on the beach, giving the Turks time to rush reinforcements there, and a stalemate ensued, just as at Anzac and Cape Helles.

A view from Turkish positions over the British landings at Suvla Bay in August 1915. The British moved far too slowly to take advantage of Turkish disarray, after the masterful strategic stroke opening a second front in the battle here.

French offensive in the Champagne



French troops in a dugout. The familiar Adrian helmet was first issued in 1915. Long artillery bombardments and a lack of mobile warfare were encouraging troops to dig more deeply into French soil.

Two Franco-British offensives were called off on 13 October 1915, after achieving minimal success with high casualties. The year 1915 has been marked by a succession of futile assaults on German positions on the Western Front, with little to show for them other than heavy casualties.

The French attempted once again to achieve a major strategic breakthrough in the Champagne, only to fail against strongly held German positions. A three-day bombardment by 2,500 guns heralded the French offensive by some 500,000 men. On 25 September the troops attacked the German lines in pouring rain, taking the first German line with some ease; but it took another ten days of hard fighting for limited objectives before the Allies were ready to take on the second, main, German line. French artillery observers could not spot the fall of shot on this second line as easily as they had the first, and a general shortage of howitzers, with their steep trajectory, hampered such efforts as could be made. When the French soldiers attacked, they achieved little. The offensive was abandoned with the loss of 145,000 men killed, wounded or captured.

Also on 25 September, the British launched an attack around Loos, using gas, but unfortunately for the British soldiers, the gas cloud did not move forward as expected and hampered the assault in places. Some success was achieved near the village of Auchy, but the British Expeditionary Force's commander, Field Marshal Sir John French, had not placed his reserve divisions close enough to the line for them to arrive in time to capitalize on it. When they did finally attack, there were 8,000 casualties out of 10,000 who went over the top. As in the Champagne, the German second-line defences were stronger than the first-line ones, and the absence of an adequate preliminary artillery barrage only made the carnage even more futile. Whereas the British lost about 50,000 men in the Battle of Loos, total German losses in the two battles were only half of the Allied total.

SECOND BATTLE OF CHAMPAGNE AND BATTLE OF LOOS-ARTOIS

DATES:	September–October 1915
COMBATANTS:	France and Britain vs Germany
CASUALTIES:	France, 191,000; Britain, 50,000; Germany, 115,000
RESULT:	Germans stopped British and French from obtaining their objectives, leading to stalemate

Austro-Hungarian infantry collect Russian rifles from a captured trench. Russian failures in the summer campaigns of 1915 led Tsar Nicholas to risk his prestige by taking personal control of the war.

Tsar takes charge after disasters

As the Tsar of all the Russias, Nicholas II, replaced his uncle, Grand Duke Nicholas as overall commander of the Russian armies on 5 September 1915. Since May, the Russians have been pummelled by German-led offensives that have pushed them out of Galicia, Russian Poland and Courland.

When the Germans began an offensive in western Galicia on 2 May, they tried new artillery bombardment tactics. Starting with a steady rate of fire on 1 May, the barrage was intensified in the final hour before the actual assault. These tactics proved effective as for the most part the dazed Russians were unable to defend their positions, a huge gap was torn in their lines and a steady retreat that would last all summer began.

> “SUBSIDIARY OFFENSIVES FOLLOWED IN EAST PRUSSIA AND ACROSS THE SAN RIVER IN LATE MAY AND EARLY JUNE, AND BY 17 JUNE OVER 500,000 RUSSIAN SOLDIERS HAD BEEN KILLED, WOUNDED OR CAPTURED”

Subsidiary offensives followed in East Prussia and across the San river in late May and early June, and by 17 June over 500,000 Russian soldiers had been killed, wounded or captured.

In July, the Germans and Austro-Hungarians invaded Russian Poland. At first the Russian reserves slowed the German advance enough to give some hope of halting it altogether. However, the risk of standing and fighting was that if something went wrong a huge number of troops would be cut off west of Warsaw. Instead, a retreat was ordered by the then overall Russian commander, Grand Duke Nicholas. Warsaw fell on 4 August, and the retreat continued throughout the month.

Italy joins war

The Italian army called off its fourth offensive of the year, along the Isonzo river, on 2 December. The Italian commander, General Luigi Cadorna, has been trying all year to achieve a strategic breakthrough here in order to capture the cities of Gorizia, and ultimately Trieste. The Italians have suffered heavy casualties, some 175,000 men, to the Austro-Hungarians' 115,000.

After the government of Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary on 23 May 1915, the Italian army faced a perplexing problem in devising a war. The border between the two countries is effectively the Alps, for the most part extremely difficult terrain for fighting battles and favourable to the defender. The two main places for military operations were east of Udine, along the Isonzo river and east of Lake Garda, in the valley of the Adige river.

A series of battles of the Isonzo began on 29 June 1915, in which the Italians were at a dramatic disadvantage. The Austro-Hungarian army had almost a year's worth of military experience of modern warfare, and had been digging defensive positions along the border for some time after the political crisis had developed between the two states. The Italians, on the other hand, had paid little attention to the effectiveness of machine guns, the futility of massed infantry assaults and the need for heavy howitzers.

> "THE ITALIANS, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAD PAID LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MACHINE GUNS"

An Italian propaganda photograph suggests the Alpini mountain troops use all means at their disposal to defeat the enemy.

IN BRIEF

- On 18 September 1915, Kaiser Wilhelm II ended the campaign of unrestricted warfare using submarines against shipping around the British Isles, having already imposed limits on attacks in August.
- British troops were halted in their advance up the Euphrates at Ctesiphon on 22 November 1915. Although the 11,000-strong British force, well equipped with artillery, drove a larger Turkish force of 18,000 men out of their entrenchments around the city, both sides suffered heavy casualties. After the battle, the British commander, Major General Charles Townshend, concerned about the security of his supply line, withdrew to Kut al-Amara, which he had captured in September.
- The arrival of King Peter of Serbia at Brindisi in Italy on 15 December 1915 marked the end of the conquest of his kingdom by Austro-Hungarian, German and Bulgarian troops in a two-month campaign that began on 11 October 1915, the day after Bulgaria entered the war.

Fighting at Verdun grinds on

A German soldier, next to the remains of a French soldier, peers up from a ruined trench toward French lines. The determined French defensive slowed the Germans decisively.

German forces attacking French defences at Verdun captured the village of Malancourt on 31 March 1916. Major German operations ceased on 23 March, but local attacks aimed at securing limited objectives continue on the Verdun sector of the front.

After capturing Fort Douaumont, German troops became more involved in small operations aimed at taking French positions. On 25 February, the commander of the French forces, General Frédéric Herr, was relieved and General Henri Philippe Pétain was appointed in his place. The next major battle was fought for the village of Douaumont. Pétain requested his troops to fight to the last in this and other positions that constituted the main line of resistance, in order to buy time for reinforcements, especially of artillery, to reach the front. Every shell hole, every basement of ruined houses, every tree stump became a strongpoint to the French, and the Germans suffered heavy casualties in their advance. Only when flamethrowers were deployed on 29 February did the Germans turn the tide in their favour at Douaumont. On 2 March the village was in German hands, and the first phase of the Verdun offensive ended.

As the Germans switched their attention to the flanks of the original sector for attack, French artillery on the left bank of the Meuse subjected the main German thrust to enfilading fire. The fighting here revolved around Côte 304 and Le Mort Homme, hills that the French were using to observe their fall of shot. After attacks on Le Mort Homme were halted by French artillery fire, the Germans switched their attention to Côte 304. On 20 March, the assault began, but heavy rain on 21 March turned the battlefield into a quagmire, forcing the Germans to abandon their attacks on 23 March. On the right bank of the Meuse, the Germans restricted themselves to attacks around Fort Vaux that achieved little, although at one time it was claimed the fort had fallen. Medals were awarded, only to be withdrawn later when the truth was learned – the fort was still in French hands.

Mexican guerrillas invade United States

Pancho Villa, a guerrilla leader in northern Mexico, crossed the Mexican-US border and occupied the town of Columbus, New Mexico, on 9 March 1916. The US government has responded by ordering a punitive expedition to conduct an incursion into Mexico.

Mexico has suffered instability and civil war since 1910, when the long-standing regime of Porfirio Díaz was challenged by an alliance of forces of which Villa was a part. Díaz was forced into exile, but civil war continued as Francisco Madero, then Victoriano Huerta and finally Venusitano Carranza in turn became president after coups and further civil conflict. Villa turned against his former ally, Carranza, whose regime had been recognized by the United States government in October 1915. The guerrillas took a hundred horses and mules, burned Columbus and killed 17 Americans and 67 Mexicans.

Pancho Villa rides with members of his Division del Norte. Villa's anger with the US government's intervention in the Mexican civil war provoked his attack on Columbus, New Mexico.

German offensive at Verdun

The Germans occupied Fort Douaumont, the strongest of the forts built around the French city of Verdun, on 25 February 1916. The fort had virtually been abandoned by the French and it needed only a small patrol of German soldiers to capture it.

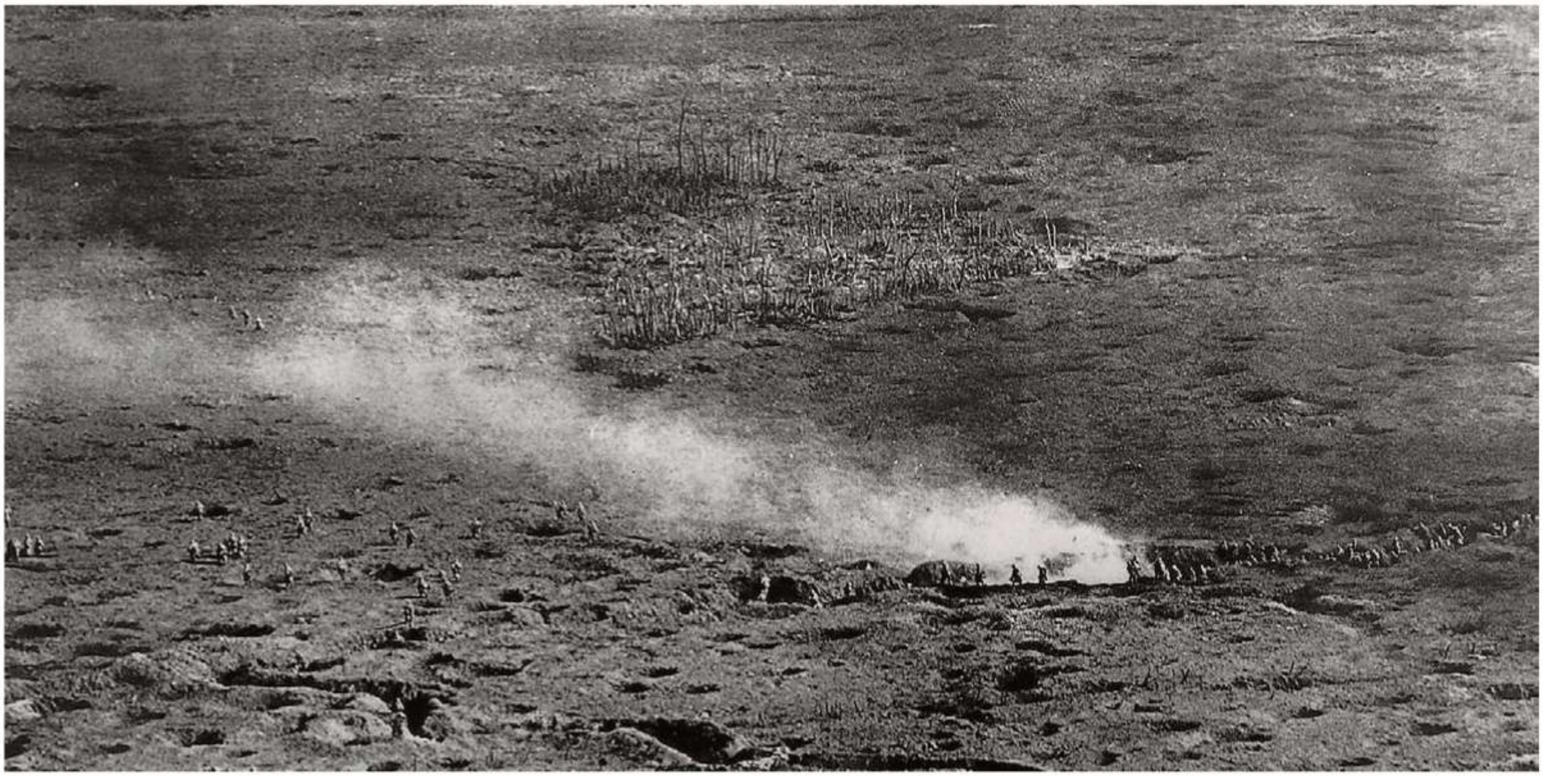
The German offensive at Verdun began on 21 February, having been delayed for ten days by bad weather. The German supreme commander, General Erich von Falkenhayn, viewed the attack not as an attempt to achieve a strategic breakthrough, but rather a means of knocking France out of the War through a battle of attrition. Heavy French casualties in 1915 had already sapped the French army's will to fight, and von Falkenhayn correctly believed that the French would go to great lengths to defend Verdun, a city of considerable historic importance to the country.

Von Falkenhayn's plan saw the fight as one fought by German troops, the role of the infantry being to fight for limited goals, using tactics and weapons that reduced the risk of heavy casualties. After the bombardment lifted from the French positions, specially trained assault battalions, armed with grenades and flamethrowers, would rush forward to seize the trenches. They would be followed closely by German forces advancing in traditional fight line formation, who would occupy the ground gained and defend it against the expected counter-attack.

German tactics have worked very well in the battle so far, although the Verdun front is defended largely by French second-line troops. However, as von Falkenhayn hoped, the French have decided to defend Verdun with all possible resources, and are rushing troops to reinforce their lines.

BATTLE OF VERDUN

DATES:	February-December 1916
COMBATANTS:	France vs Germany
CASUALTIES:	France, 542,000; Germany, 434,000
RESULT:	French victory



French troops advance across a part of the moonscape that was created around Verdun as a result of the heavy shelling that had occurred over the course of the battle.

IN BRIEF

The last British troops were withdrawn from the Helles beaches, Gallipoli on 8 January 1916, ending the attempt to seize control of the Dardanelles and Constantinople from the Turks, following the withdrawl of the last forces at Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove on 20 December.

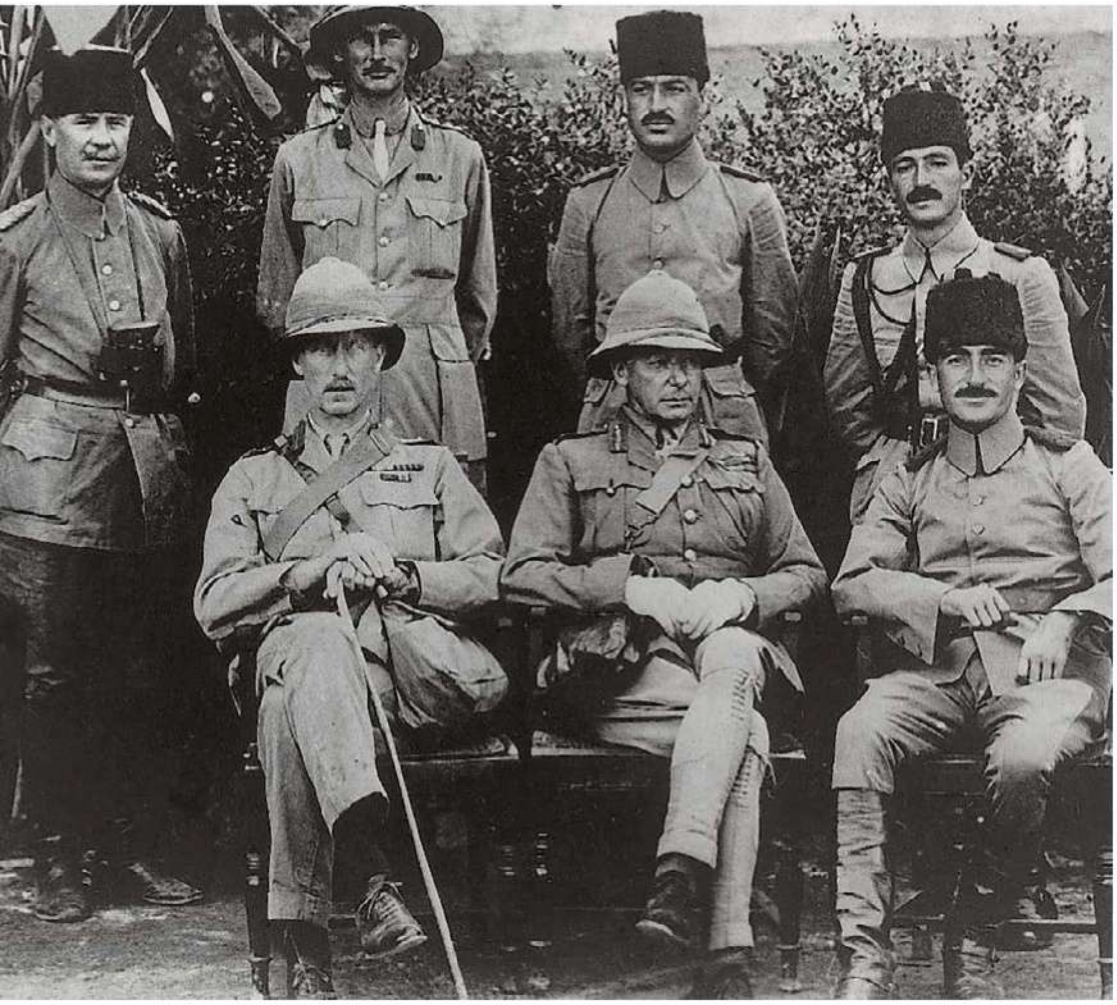
Surrender of Kut

The British army suffered its worst defeat since surrendering to American rebels at Yorktown in 1781, when a 10,000-strong force besieged at Kut al-Amara for four months surrendered to the besieging Turks on 29 April 1916. The Turks then massacred the 4,000 surviving Arab residents of the Mesopotamian city.

The British commander, Major General Charles Townshend, had retreated to make a stand at Kut after his attack on the Turks at Ctesiphon in November 1915 failed to achieve a breakthrough. On 3 December, he established his defences, which the Turkish commander, General Nureddin Pasha, probed but declined to assault. However, on Christmas Eve, Nureddin ordered a full-scale attack, which was repulsed with heavy losses. He was then replaced as commander by Enver Pasha's uncle, Mohammed Khalil Bey.

Townshend sent word to General Sir John Nixon at Basra that he needed help in order to break out, but Nixon ordered him to hold on until relief arrived. When Townshend reported that his supplies would run out within a month, when in fact they could have been made to last four months, Nixon ordered the urgent organization of a relief column. The British made several separate attempts to raise the siege in January 1916, before their main attack on 8 March. Too much time was spent in dressing lines for the attack, on the expectation that the Turks had their defences fully manned, when in fact they only had small outposts in place when the British arrived. By the time the attack went in, the Turks had reinforced the threatened sector and the British were badly defeated.

Townshend allowed too many Arab residents of the town to remain. By the end of April, after an attempt to bribe the Turks to let Townshend and his men go, Townshend had no choice but to surrender.



Major General Charles Townshend (seated, centre) together with his Turkish captors after he had surrendered his army at Kut al-Amara in April 1916.

War comes to Dublin

British troops around the main strongpoint of the Irish insurrectionists, the Dublin General Post Office building.

Irish nationalists, who had taken control of several important buildings in Dublin and proclaimed the independence of an Irish republic, surrendered on 29 April 1916 to British forces who had spent five days fighting in the streets to evict them.

Ireland had been on the verge of civil war at the outbreak of war, as supporters of Home Rule were threatened by Unionists who did not want a parliament for Ireland, but direct rule from Westminster. A Home Rule law was passed just as Europe went to war, and its provisions were shelved until the end of the conflict. Many of those who had been training to fight one another in Ireland joined the British army instead, although some of the most radical proponents of Home Rule, who did not believe the law went far enough, stayed out of the army. Armed with German weapons, they took control of the Dublin General Post Office on Easter Monday, 24 April.

The uprising was limited to Dublin, although the rebels had hoped for units of Irish Volunteers, as they called their army, to take up arms throughout the country. The nationalists had some successes within the city, including an ambush at Mount Street Bridge that caused 250 casualties, almost half the total British losses during the uprising. The British army had artillery, which the nationalists did not, and used incendiary shells that caused fires difficult to put out. The British also used armoured cars mounted with machine guns to patrol the streets. Some 1,200 people were killed or wounded during the fighting, over 800 of them civilians.

German gains at Verdun

The German army has achieved some small successes at Verdun, but at the cost of horrific casualties. Fighting has continued here throughout the months of April and May, with both sides attempting offensives during this time.

The worst fighting occurred at Le Mort Homme ridge and neighbouring Côte 304. The Germans focused their main attack in April on Le Mort Homme, on 9 April 1916. The fighting was the most savage so far and was immediately followed by twelve days of rain. At the end of this wet spell, the French counter-attacked and recovered their positions, thanks in part to their control of Côte 304. The Germans then decided that the fall of Côte 304 would ensure the capture of Le Mort Homme. A night attack, which was preceded by an intense 36-hour bombardment, was successful and on 4 May, the whole of Côte 304 was in German hands. Le Mort Homme fell during subsequent fighting.

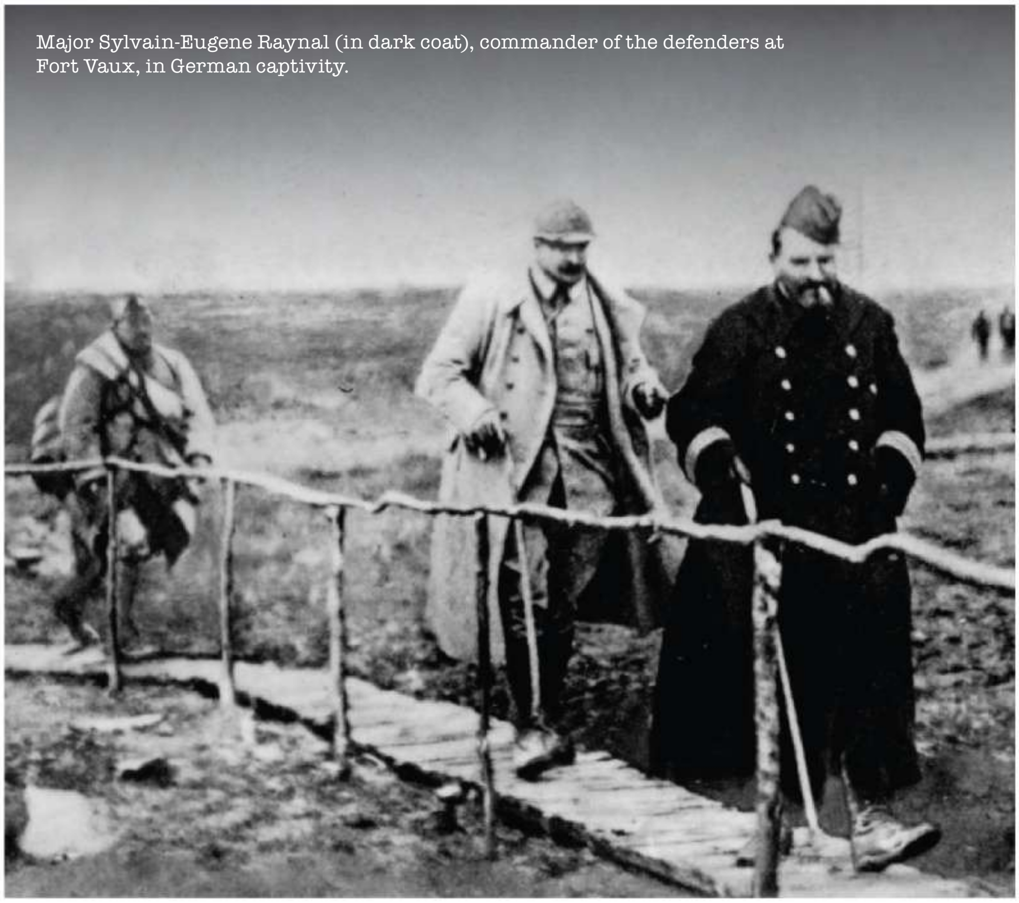
Like Le Mort Homme, Fort Vaux also remained the focus of German attention. Following a failed attack on 7 May, the munitions stored at captured Fort Douaumont exploded on 8 May, so the Germans had to spend some weeks restocking with ammunition before they could attack again. A new French commander, General Robert Nivelle, replaced General Pétain on 1 May, and immediately planned an attack on Douaumont. After a six-day bombardment starting on 16 May, two regiments assaulted the fort. At first the French commander in charge, General Charles Mangin, believed himself to be successful and announced the recapture of the fort, but in the event the Germans were able to recover their position, and the French suffered very heavily.

> “GENERAL CHARLES MANGIN, BELIEVED HIMSELF TO BE SUCCESSFUL AND ANNOUNCED THE RECAPTURE OF THE FORT”

Russian offensive goes wrong

A badly organized Russian attack at Lake Naroch in Belorussia ended on 30 April 1916 when a German counter-offensive recovered all the ground that had been lost in two days. The Russians had launched their attack on 18 March to relieve the pressure on the French at Verdun, but they did not have a proper artillery fire plan, nor had any serious reconnaissance been carried out on the German positions. The result was an ineffective barrage that missed most meaningful targets, and infantry assaults that were cut down in swathes by German machine guns. In the end the Russians lost over five times as many casualties as the Germans – 110,000 to 20,000.

Russian prisoners captured during the Lake Naroch fighting in 1916. The Russian assault was an object lesson in how not to conduct a battle.



Major Sylvain-Eugene Raynal (in dark coat), commander of the defenders at Fort Vaux, in German captivity.

Fort Vaux falls

The gallant defence of Fort Vaux came to an end when the garrison surrendered on 7 June 1916. The French commandant, Major Sylvain-Eugene Raynal, raised the white flag after four days without water in the face of overwhelming odds.

The Germans had 23,000 men against Major Raynal's 400 in the fort, which was surrounded on 2 June. The fort's heaviest weapon, a 75mm gun, had been knocked out of action in February.

As initial German attacks captured parts of the fort, Major Raynal established a defence in depth. He positioned machine guns in the fort's communication tunnels so that even though the Germans controlled several key gun emplacements, they could not advance further without taking heavy casualties. Raynal also positioned further tunnel blocks behind the forward ones. Once the Germans had killed or captured the forward posts, the support groups were able to blunt the attack before it could make further progress.

For three days the Germans advanced slowly through the tunnels, suffering heavy casualties. The Germans couldn't use flamethrowers effectively in the closed, airless tunnels, and instead had to pour the weapons' inflammable liquid down the tunnel and try to ignite it with grenades. Meanwhile, the French defenders had nothing to drink except condensation off the walls or their own urine.

The lack of water also made hygiene impossible and filth built up alongside the wounded and dead in the tunnels. When the thirst became too much, Raynal sent his last carrier pigeon out to his superiors with a message saying he was about to surrender, and on 7 June he raised the white flag. The heir to the imperial throne, Crown Prince Wilhelm, offered his personal congratulations to Major Raynal and gave a sword to him. Raynal proudly commented, "Sir, you did not defeat me; thirst defeated me."

> "THE GERMANS HAD 23,000 MEN AGAINST MAJOR RAYNAL'S 400 IN THE FORT"

OBITUARY

Lord Kitchener (1850–1916)
The British Secretary of State for War, Field Marshal Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener, was lost at sea on 5 June 1916. He was en route to Russia aboard HMS Hampshire when the cruiser struck a mine in the middle of a gale near the Orkney islands and sank.

Kitchener made his reputation serving with British forces in Egypt and the Sudan in the 1880s and 1890s, and also had a key role commanding British forces during the latter half of the Second Boer War, presiding over the defeat of the Boers in 1901–02. He believed the First World War would be a long one, and that Britain needed considerable reinforcement of its small peacetime army. His image famously appeared on a recruiting poster pointing aggressively at the viewer, and insisting that "Your country needs You."

He never married.

Kitchener had become Britain's War Minister on 6 August 1914.

Troops mass at the Somme river

Men of the 4th Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment, before the Battle of the Somme. The battalion had been part of the 29th Division at Gallipoli in 1915.

The steady rumble of artillery filled the air of Picardy in north-eastern France for a week from 24 June 1916, heralding the coming onslaught against German trenches either side of the Somme river.

The British army had amassed the largest number of guns in their history, and had stockpiled nearly two million shells for the bombardment of the German positions. However, two-thirds of the British guns were lighter divisional weapons, whereas it was only the heaviest artillery that had any effect on the German trenches. In spite of this, the bombardment appeared to produce an impressive effect. Huge plumes of smoke and dirt were blasted high into the air, and it seemed, as the British Fourth Army commander, General Sir Henry Rawlinson, put it, that "nothing could exist at the conclusion of the bombardment in the area covered by it".

> "IT SEEMED, AS THE BRITISH FOURTH ARMY COMMANDER, GENERAL SIR HENRY RAWLINSON, PUT IT, THAT "NOTHING COULD EXIST AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE BOMBARDMENT IN THE AREA COVERED BY IT"

"There's something wrong with our bloody ships"

The largest naval battle of the First World War in the North Sea has pitted the German High Seas Fleet against the British Grand Fleet in a running action that nearly brought catastrophe to the German squadrons. The result was a strategic victory for the British, but with heavy losses of both ships and men.

A Royal Navy intercept of German messages together with other signs of German naval activity led them to conclude that the Germans would be putting to sea with a significant part of their fleet. Just as Scheer wanted to find part of the British fleet, so the British commander, Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, sought to concentrate the whole of his markedly larger squadron. Consequently, he put to sea with all his ships, even before the Germans had left port.

The two sides sighted one another at 3.20 p.m. on 31 May 1916, and battle was joined between each fleet's battlecruisers. In just over an hour, the British lost two of theirs, leading to the comment by Vice Admiral Sir David Beatty that "There's something wrong with our bloody ships today." He turned back to lure the Germans toward Jellicoe's dreadnoughts. At 6.30 p.m., the Germans realized that they were heading for the main British fleet, and did the first of three about turns that eventually saved them from catastrophe. The British lost another battlecruiser. The Battle of Jutland continued even after nightfall, with the Germans racing for home, while the British tried to locate their main force in order to sink some enemy warships. Both sides sustained further losses, but the Germans escaped relatively lightly.

The British lost over 6,000 crew, three capital ships and 11 smaller ships; the Germans, however, lost 2,500 crew, one capital ship, and 10 smaller ships.

Warfare's new higher dimension

The death of the Eagle of Lille, Lieutenant Max Immelmann, on 18 June 1916, marked the end of the career of Germany's first air ace. He was awarded the German empire's highest decoration, the Orden Pour Le Mérite, in January 1916, by the Kaiser, together with his main rival, Oswald Boelcke. Immelmann invented an aerial manoeuvre, the Immelmann Turn, which was either a chandelle (a steep climb and bank) or a half loop and half roll. Whichever the actual manoeuvre, the result was a change of direction that helped him toward his total of 15 kills.

Immelmann's career as a pilot can stand as a symbol of the development of aviation in the First World War. He joined the Imperial German Air Service, the Luftstreitekräfte, at the outbreak of war. The military use of aircraft had been the subject of theory for several years even before the formation of such pioneering air services as the German one, or France's Aéronautique Militaire. It was generally assumed that they would have an important role in reconnaissance, as well as a lesser one as aerial artillery, dropping explosive devices. However, what hampered the effectiveness of those early aircraft was their under-powered engines, as well as their fragile structures of canvas, wood and wire. While Immelmann flew such planes on reconnaissance missions, the first ace, Frenchman Roland Garros, was shooting down similar aircraft, thereby introducing aerial combat to war.

These reconnaissance missions had already proved invaluable in the war. On the Western Front, the victory at the Marne was in part the result of French and British generals taking note of what an aerial patrol had discovered about German troop movements. Similarly, the German victory at Tannenberg was partly made possible by successful aerial reconnaissance missions. Aircraft were also able to assist with artillery fire, providing a means of spotting the fall of shot, and communicating back to the gunners by means of wireless telegraphy. By the time of the Battle of Verdun, aerial artillery spotting had become so important that the Chief of the German General Staff, General Erich von Falkenhayn, gave a high priority to shooting down French observation planes and balloons.

The first aerial combat was a matter of pilots taking rifles or pistols up with them and taking potshots as they flew past an enemy plane. Two-seater aircraft were subsequently adopted to carry rearward-firing machine guns. The first aerial victory was the shooting down of a German aircraft by a French two-seater biplane on 5 October 1914. Attempts were made using pusher aircraft (with the engine behind the crew) to develop a forward-firing system, but the pushers were slower than the tractor, front-engined aircraft, on which aiming a machine gun proved difficult. Garros, however, introduced a system that enabled him to fire through the forward propeller blades. A more sophisticated system was introduced by Anthony Fokker on German monoplanes, entering service in mid-1915. These Fokker monoplanes used a single machine gun firing forward and proved highly effective.

The first pilot to shoot down an enemy aircraft using a Fokker monoplane equipped with the interruptor gear was Immelmann's great rival, Oswald Boelcke, on 1 August 1915. Immelmann's ten-month career in Fokkers marked a period of transition for aerial warfare. Hitherto, aircraft normally flew singly or in pairs, but Boelcke and Immelmann introduced larger formations of three or four aircraft that were able to use their technical superiority more effectively

The Junkers J2 was a highly innovative, all-metal aircraft, although it was very heavy and therefore did not fly very well.

The Fokker Dr 1 triplane is possibly the most famous aeroplane of the First World War. It was highly acrobatic, but consequently difficult to fly. It was also comparatively slow.

TOP 10 ACES

Manfred von Richthofen	German	80
René Fonck	France	75
Billy Bishop	Canada	72
Ernst Udet	Germany	62
Mick Mannock	Britain	61
Raymond Collishaw	Canada	60
James McCudden	Britain	57
Andrew Beauchamp-Proctor	South Africa	54
Erich Löwenhardt	Germany	54
Donald MacLaren	Canada	54

René Fonck was the leading Allied air ace of the First World War. He became a pilot in 1915, and began flying fighters in the elite Escadrille des Cigognes two years later.

by also having a numerical superiority. The French and British responded with a set of better aircraft than the Fokker – the De Havilland DH2, the FE2b and the Vickers Gunbus, all pusher aircraft, and the French Nieuport 11, a tractor aircraft with a gun mounted above the wing – and larger flights of four or five. The Fokkers' domination of the skies from August 1915 ended in the summer of 1916, and the death of Immelmann in a sense marked the end of the second phase of the air war.

Fighter pilots became celebrities during the First World War, with Immelmann and Boelcke being joined by such individuals as Baron Manfred von Richthofen (the "Red Baron", so-called because he painted his aircraft a bright red), Georges Guynemer of France and Albert Ball of Britain. The popular idea of individual pilots jousting in the skies like modern versions of medieval knights provided a glamorous contrast to the dour proletarian struggle half-fought underground in the trenches. However, the reality of aerial warfare was considerably different, especially by the end of the War. There was considerable danger for the pilots and observers in the air, with aircraft engines being unreliable, and fire having such rapid and catastrophic consequences that it was not unusual for men to hurl themselves out of blazing aircraft and plummet to their deaths in these pre-parachute days, rather than burn alive. Oily filth streamed into their faces and the cold at altitude was highly uncomfortable. Furthermore, the majority of the aircraft were not single-seat fighters, but planes with two or more crew places, flying slowly to take photographs or drop bombs. Formation flying was almost universal by the end of the war, and even in 1916, Boelcke's famous rules of fighting, which are still studied by pilots, recommended attacking in groups.

Larger and heavier aircraft were built during the war, including big bombers such as the Handley-Page O/400, capable of flying from bases in France all the way to Germany and back in a night. Engines became more efficient, while metal began to replace wood in aircraft such as the Junkers J1 and Junkers J2; monoplane designs were found to be aerodynamically preferable to the biplane or triplane. The pioneers of military aviation in 1914 had blazed a trail that was now followed by bigger and better aircraft that flew faster, higher and further than ever before.

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The Handley-Page O/400 was typical of the large bombers built during the First World War. These could deliver around 2000 lbs (900 kg) of bombs to a range of 750 miles (1,200 km).

"Big push" on the Somme, 20,000 killed on first day

A still from the film Battle of the Somme depicting British troops going "over the top" during the battle. British generals did not believe the volunteer "New Army" was capable of any more sophisticated tactics than a marching advance toward the enemy lines.

A major Anglo-French offensive along the Somme river was fought through July and August, resulting in the removal of the Chief of the German General Staff, General Erich von Falkenhayn, who was replaced by Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg on 29 August 1916.

At 7.20 a.m. on 1 July, the infantry assault on the Somme began as a large mine was detonated under Hawthorn Ridge, and the infantry went over the top ten minutes later. The British advanced at a walking pace, partly due to lack of training for the men, and partly because they were heavily burdened with some 66 lbs (30 kg) of equipment. It was believed that the heavy artillery bombardment would kill enough Germans and leave the remainder too disorganized to man their trenches and fire their machine guns effectively.

The best success of the day came on the southern sector of the front, around the village of Montauban, and further south where the French XX Corps advanced. More characteristic of the day's successes was the attack on Thiepval in which the 36th (Ulster) Division advanced against the Schwaben Redoubt and seized both the German front line and then the second line. But German artillery fire made it impossible to reinforce these successes and the British were forced abandoned these positions. One of the worst disasters came at Hawthorn Ridge, where the attackers following up the explosion were halted in no-man's-land, failing even to reach the German barbed-wire entanglements.

General Sir Douglas Haig now ordered a series of limited attacks along the front, attacking such places as Mametz Wood, to keep constant pressure on the Germans. Thousands died for little gain in these actions, as they lacked the strength needed to achieve a major success. In the first two days, had the British reconnoitred more effectively, they might have made gains around Ovillers and Longueval, but these opportunities were missed.

More ambitious attacks followed at Bazentin Ridge and at Pozières on 14 July, and over the days that followed the fighting continued, with even a cavalry charge on High Wood. But Haig accepted that the likelihood of a major breakthrough had passed and once again reverted to small-scale assaults that were intended to keep pressure on the Germans.

THE SOMME

DATES:	July-November 1916
COMBATANTS:	Britain and France vs Germany
CASUALTIES:	Britain, 420,000; France, 200,000; Germany, 600,000
RESULT:	Stalemate

"They shall not pass"

On 12 August 1916, the German offensive at Verdun was effectively called off after nearly two weeks of fighting between Fleury and Thiaumont. Further fighting in this sector now depends on the French ability to launch counter-attacks.

The Germans had focused on the Fleury-Thiaumont area since 23 June, when they used phosgene gas against French artillery batteries in an attempt to occupy Fort Souville, Fleury and a fortification at Thiaumont. The French line was nearly breached, but company and battalion officers managed to organize enough troops to halt the Germans.

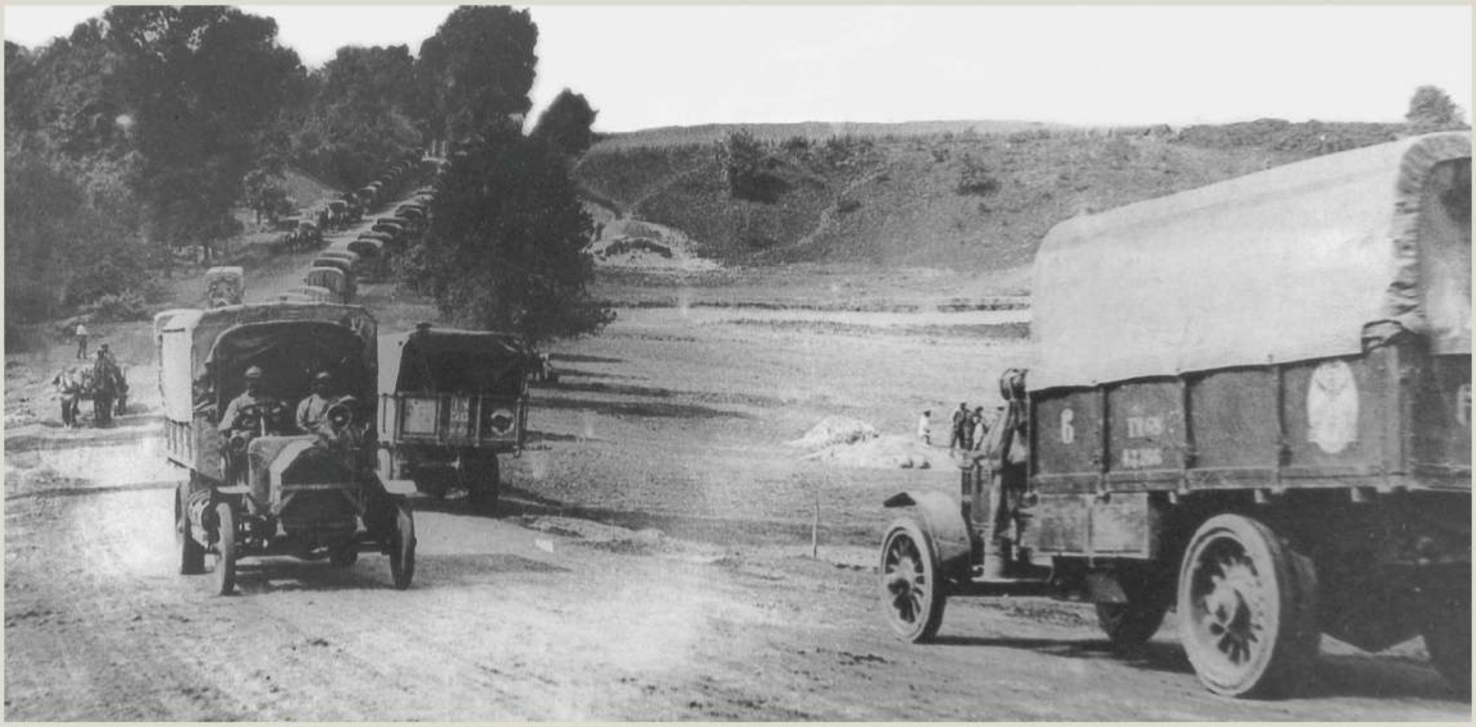
When the Somme offensive began, the Germans moved troops from Verdun to reinforce their front lines against the British, and on 12 July General Robert Nivelle, the French commander, praised the resistance of his soldiers, ending with the slogan "They shall not pass." The French defence of Verdun owed much to a continuous flow of supplies and reinforcements, driven by trucks along a single road, La Voie Sacrée, with a truck passing every 14 seconds in one direction or the other.

> "FURTHER FIGHTING IN THIS SECTOR NOW DEPENDS ON THE FRENCH ABILITY TO LAUNCH COUNTER-ATTACKS"

British heavy howitzers bombard German lines during the Somme offensive.

LE VOIE SACRÉE

One important target of the German offensive at Verdun was the road that ran almost due south between Bar-le-Duc and Verdun, as it had become the main road route of supply for the French army that was defending the city. The road was guarded by reservists, who also maintained the surface, and by fighter squadrons intended to intercept any attempt by the Germans to bomb the road. Traffic flowed constantly along the road, bringing around 7,000 tons of ammunition each day, as well as reinforcements. A truck passed a given point along the road every 14 seconds. Curiously, food did not travel along the road, but along a parallel, narrow-gauge, single-track railway, known as Le Meusin. During the campaign, it was known as La Route.

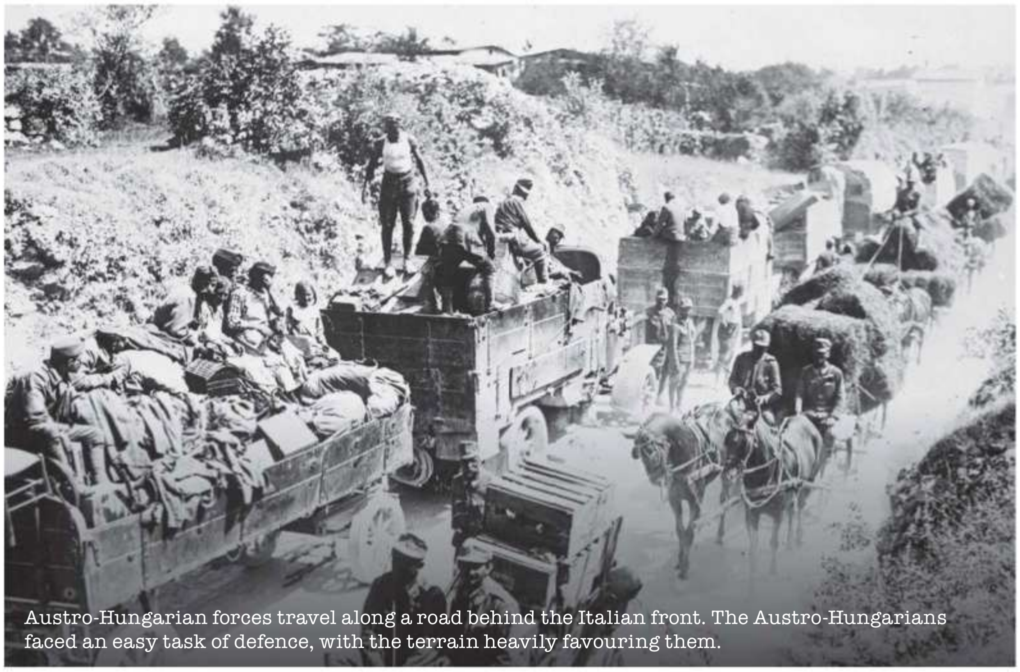


Le Voie Sacrée, at its peak, used 12,000 vehicles and sustained the French defence. A full division's worth of men was employed on keeping it in repair, mostly shovelling gravel on the road. Troops were not allowed to march on it, to ensure the steady parade of trucks continued.

Success at Gorizia

Italy achieved its first major success of the war when their sixth offensive on the Isonzo front led to the capture of the town of Gorizia on 8 August 1916.

By restricting the operation to a much narrower 8-mile (13-km) width of front, and concentrating ten divisions there, with excellent intelligence work concealing these movements, General Luigi Cadorna launched his attack on 6 August, capturing Mount Sabatino and Mount Padgora on the first day. Control of the mountains helped the Italians take Gorizia. An earlier attack in March in the same area had failed, although the Italians achieved some gains on the Asiago Plateau, north-west of the Isonzo, in May.



Austro-Hungarian forces travel along a road behind the Italian front. The Austro-Hungarians faced an easy task of defence, with the terrain heavily favouring them.

Russia's last throw of the dice?

Russian artillerymen ford a flooded river with a horse-drawn field gun. The Brusilov offensive effectively broke the Austro-Hungarian army on the Eastern Front, at the cost of the Russian one.

A two-month offensive by the Russians on the Eastern Front came to an end on 17 August 1916. Russian losses were very heavy, with over half a million casualties, but they achieved great gains, largely at the expense of Austria-Hungary in the Carpathians.

The attack was the idea of General Alexei Brusilov, who was given command of the whole South-Western Front, from Lwow to Bukovina. He adopted an operational plan of a short, but very intense bombardment, followed by a rapid infantry assault spearheaded by special units of shock troops. The plan worked extremely well and when the attack began on 4 June, was immediately successful.

The rapid advance ensured that by 12 June the Russians had taken over 200,000 prisoners, but the Russian steamroller soon ran out of steam as it outran its supply lines and artillery cover, typical of the offensives of the First World War. When Brusilov tried to restart his attack on 28 July, his gains were much more limited.

> “THE PLAN WORKED EXTREMELY WELL AND WHEN THE ATTACK BEGAN ON 4 JUNE, WAS IMMEDIATELY SUCCESSFUL”

More deadly than battle

The continued resistance during 1916 of a small German army in German East Africa, even though outnumbered by three to one, prevented the British from reinforcing their effort on the Western Front with troops deployed against Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck and his largely native German colonial army.

The British appointed the South African General Jan Smuts to command the army in East Africa, and he arrived at Mombasa, Kenya in February 1916. Smuts had 40,000 men against Lettow-Vorbeck's 16,000-strong force, and sent four columns into German East Africa. One advanced from Kenya, another from Nyasaland, a Portuguese force entered from Mozambique and a Belgian force from the Congo. Lettow-Vorbeck simply dodged them all, employing a "scorched earth" approach against railways and bridges that badly hampered the Allied advance. In an ironic reversal of the British experience on the Western Front, Smuts was able to capture a lot of territory, but could never inflict casualties on his German opponents. British troops were plagued with diseases and parasites that severely affected their ability to keep an army in the field, and lost considerably more men to these natural dangers than to the enemy's forces.

> “BRITISH TROOPS WERE PLAGUED WITH DISEASES AND PARASITES THAT SEVERELY AFFECTED THEIR ABILITY TO KEEP AN ARMY IN THE FIELD, AND LOST CONSIDERABLY MORE MEN TO THESE NATURAL DANGERS THAN TO THE ENEMY'S FORCES”

Small-scale catastrophes on the Somme

General Douglas Haig's "big push" on the Somme ground down into the kind of attritional battle that the French commander-in-chief, General Joseph Joffre, believed would occur. Allied attacks during the month of August were a number of small-scale attacks that achieved even less overall at a higher cost than the disastrous first-day attack. The Australian Corps attacked around Mouquet Farm on 8 August 1916 in the hope that it would lead to the capture of Thiepval, a key German redoubt on the front line. Mouquet Farm had itself been transformed into a fortress that showed signs of the new German tactic of defence in depth using linked strongpoints, in place of the continuous trench line of the first two years of war. That same day an attempt was made to capture Guillemont, a key position on the part of the line where the French and British sectors met. Neither attack was successful.

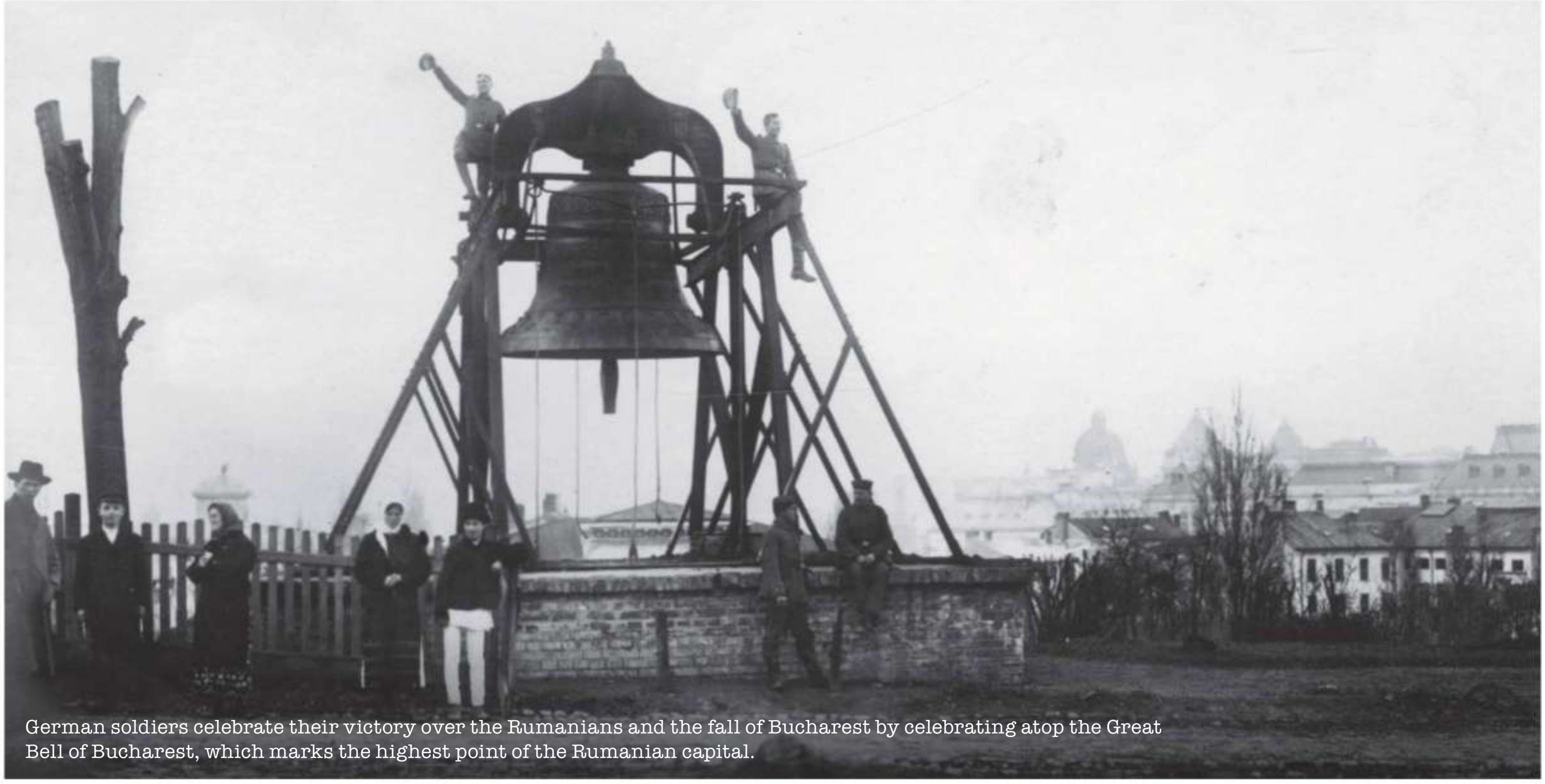
South African troops ford a river in Africa. The terrain, the climate and the diseases were more dangerous than German colonial forces to the British Imperial troops.

Rumania crushed in lightning campaign

The Rumanian capital of Bucharest fell into German hands on 6 December 1916, after a 10-week offensive hatched by General Erich von Falkenhayn swept the Rumanian army into Moldavia.

Rumania declared war on Austria-Hungary on 27 August, having been promised territorial gains by Britain, France and Russia at the expense of the Austro-Hungarians. Rumanian soldiers crossed the border between the two countries that very day. However, Rumania overestimated the success of the Brusilov offensive, believing Austria-Hungary stood on the brink of capitulating. Rumania was almost isolated by its enemies. Its long borders with Germany's allies Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria were difficult to defend, and Russia had little aid to give.

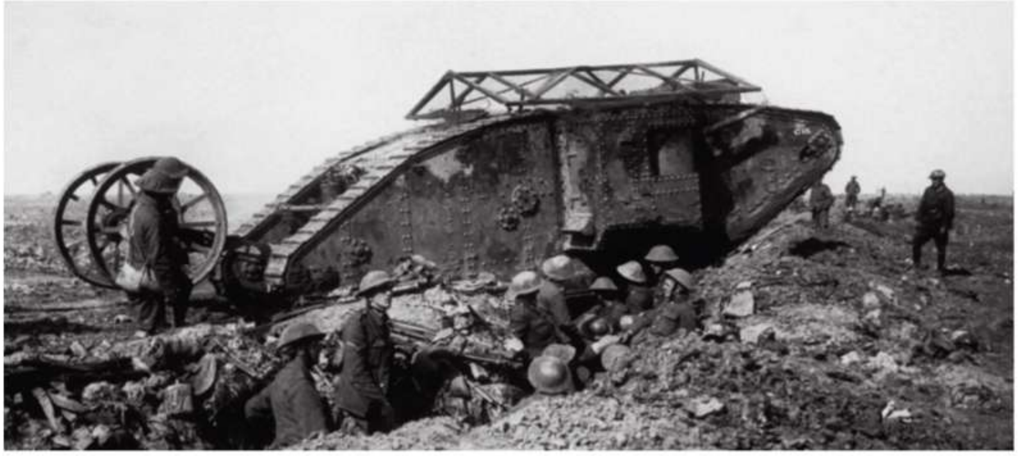
In this weak position, Rumanian resistance was easily overcome. The Germans and Austro-Hungarians first attacked in the Dobrudja, then drove the Rumanians out of Transylvania and seized the main passes through the Carpathians. A renewed offensive in November scattered the Rumanian defenders with relentless pressure and frequent shifting of the point of attack.



German soldiers celebrate their victory over the Rumanians and the fall of Bucharest by celebrating atop the Great Bell of Bucharest, which marks the highest point of the Rumanian capital.

A new weapon

The British have deployed a new weapon on the Somme. Thirty-two of these "landships", armed with two 6-pounder naval guns and two machine guns, were on the start line on 15 September 1916, the opening day of the Battle of Flers-Courcelette, although a third failed to make it into action owing to mechanical unreliability. The landships, or "tanks", proved very effective in overcoming the main obstacle causing needlessly heavy casualties among attacking British infantry: barbed wire. They are also impervious to small-arms and machine-gun fire, but vulnerable to artillery and suffer frequent mechanical breakdowns.



The landships' real purpose has been concealed by the story that they were designed as mobile water tanks for British troops in Mesopotamia.

Arabs in revolt

The Hashemite Sherif of Mecca, Hussein ibn Ali, was proclaimed king of the Hejaz and Arabia on 29 October 1916 at Mecca, having formally proclaimed his independence from Turkey on 5 June. Whereas the Turks have been imprisoning Arab nationalists throughout their empire since they entered the war, both France and Britain have been in contact with Hussein, promising an independent Arab state after the war has been won. Hussein's soldiers have been skirmishing with the Turkish garrison at Medina since June.

Attrition on the Somme ends

The British commander, General Sir Douglas Haig, has finally called off the Battle of the Somme, when the Battle of the Ancre ended on 18 November 1916. The campaign has lasted since 1 July 1916, marked by periodic offensives aiming to create a major breakthrough in the German trench lines, interspersed with periods of assaults to attain limited objectives as part of a plan to maintain the pressure on the German army.

The Somme campaign, after its first day, was a succession of battles along smaller fronts, the last major offensive being the Battle of Flers-Courcelette in September. The British finally achieved some first-day objectives, in fighting over the course of 26-28 September, capturing Thiepval and the Schwaben Redoubt, which became known as the Battle of Thiepval Ridge.

In October, the weather turned wet, foiled British efforts even further. Small gains were made but British progress since July had been so slow that the Germans had ample time to construct further trenches behind those that the British soldiers had caught with so much loss. The Battle of the Ancre, begun on 13 November, secured Beaumont Hamel at the northern end of the front.

> “SMALL GAINS WERE MADE BUT BRITISH PROGRESS”

A wounded soldier from the British armies fighting on the Somme is helped to the rear by two of his comrades. The battle ended with both sides heavily affected by high casualties.

German army concedes defeat at Verdun

On 19 December 1916, the German army found itself back in the same positions it had started in February in the great battle of attrition launched to knock France out of the War. When the Germans halted offensive operations in August, the French army refused to leave the Germans with their gains. A series of offensives recovered Fort Douaumont (24 October) and Fort Vaux (3 November) and a final offensive on 13 December captured the few positions left in German hands. The German high command views the battle as a defeat in terms of the objective of “bleeding France white”, and with their own losses far too high, no strategic advantage has been achieved.

1915–16: The futility of war

On 31 December 1916, the people of Europe had little to look forward to that would be "happy" in the New Year, after two years of extremely heavy casualties in the war. The only front on which there was any clear sign of victory was that between the Germans and the Russians. The Austro-Hungarian front to the south had turned into another disaster with the success of the Russian summer offensive. Austria-Hungary looked to be on the brink of collapse, thanks to her losses in that campaign. In Italy, the front line had hardly moved in either direction after a year-and-a-half of war. Allied forces had come and gone in European Turkey. The Western Front was apparently the most futile of all, with little movement since the trenches were originally dug in 1914.

Yet, in spite of all this comparative lack of movement, there had been a tremendous amount of activity, with millions of men suffering death or injury as a result. The last war between two of the world's great powers, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, had claimed 210,000 killed or wounded men. The last war between two of Europe's great powers, the Italo-Turkish War of 1911-12, had casualties on both sides amounting to 20,000. There had been 250,000 dead or wounded in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Four years of the American Civil War had killed or wounded 600,000. At the end of two-and-a-half years of war between Britain, Germany, Russia, France and Austria-Hungary any reasonable estimate of the likely casualties based on previous experience would have been in the order of 750,000. Turkey, Italy and Japan might have added an additional 350,000 given the more limited opportunities these nations had of fighting massed enemy formations. Yet in 1916, at the battles of the Somme and Verdun alone, 2,196,000 men were killed, wounded or missing – and these two battles only represent about one-quarter of the total casualties suffered during 1915-16.

These two years arguably represent the greatest waste of life in military history, in terms of comparing strategic gain with human loss. The cause of it is straightforward. Commanders were confronted with fighting

A swathe of dead Rumanian soldiers testify to the power of machine guns firing at dense columns of troops. People of all nations were shocked at the casualties experienced in the war.

battles using technology that they did not fully understand, and had to expend the lives of their men in order to acquire this understanding. By the end of 1916, for example, British commanders were well aware that shrapnel shells fired from lighter artillery such as the standard 18-pounder field gun were incapable of cutting the barbed-wire obstacles strewn in front of trenches. They had not experimented beforehand to find this out, and many of the dead and wounded of the Somme paid the price.

Looking for an answer

The generals and leaders of all the countries involved were in a difficult position. They had to do something in order to win the war, and the officer class of all the armies recognized that only by attacking could a war be won. For the French, who hurled a generation of young men to their deaths outside the German trenches in Champagne in 1915, attack was the only way to evict the enemy from their country. The British had to attack because their allies the French were attacking, even if the attacks were believed by British officers, such as General Haig and Field Marshal French at Loos in the autumn of 1915, to be more likely to fail than to win. The British attacked at Gallipoli to help the Russians and keep the Turks away from Egypt. The Germans attacked in the East, because the Russian numerical superiority had to be kept away from German territory, while they attacked in the West at Verdun in 1916 because they believed that was the decisive theatre.

The courage (or foolishness, some might say) of those marching out of the trenches in the face of likely injury or death on such a scale is astonishing. Even more astonishing is the blithe spirit with which the men of 1915 and 1916 went in to battle. German soldiers advanced singing "Deutschland über alles." At Gallipoli, soldiers in a British unit went forward dribbling a football amongst them, until the Turkish machine guns cut them down. It was the same at the Battle of the Somme.

Beastly Hun

As the war dragged on, another motivation for risking one's life was founded on the image of the enemy created by both rumour and actively promoted through the press. The British emphasized the beastliness of the "Hun", who had shot civilians and burned villages in Belgium. The Germans, meanwhile, believed that the British would fight to the last Frenchman, while the French had forced this war on Germany because they had been unwilling to accept the verdict of 1870–71. For Germans, the war became one of national survival, especially as the British blockade began to affect their economy and food supplies severely. The pinch was already apparent to Germany's political leaders in late 1916 and they began pondering what measures could be taken.

The futility of this war had been suspected by political thinkers on the Left from the outset. It was the most radical elements who observed with a jaundiced eye their more conservative colleagues voting eagerly for war credits to prove their loyalty to a ruling class that would never accept them or offer the reforms they fought for. The Russian, Vladimir Lenin, wanted the war to be transformed from one of nation against nation into an international struggle of the working class against the rulers. After 1915, Lenin's vision began to take shape as industrial unrest started to affect war production. In April 1916, British jute workers at Dundee went on strike, not for peace, but for wage increases to combat the price inflation that affected their living standards severely. Food shortages in Germany caused shipyard strikes in June 1916. On 30 October 1916, troops in the Russian capital of Petrograd joined strikers at arms factories, and fought with the police and Cossacks, while British workers struck in protest at the conscription of one of their engineer colleagues in November. One glimmer of light for the warmongers, however, was the rejection by a substantial majority of a resolution at a Labour party conference in early 1917 calling for an immediate end to the war.

So long as the Labour movement was split in all the warring countries, Lenin's dream remained impracticable, and more men chose to die for their country, as opposed to their class.

CASUALTIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS, 1915–16

1915

Chemin des Dames	285,000	French gain little territory
Second Ypres	104,208	Stalemate
Gallipoli	503,000	Turks drive off British
Second Artois	186,000	Stalemate
Second Champagne & Third Artois	440,000	Stalemate
Eastern Front	3,000,000	Major advances for Germans and Austro-Hungarians
Italian front	415,000	Stalemate

1916

Verdun	976,000	Germans are driven back to start line
Asiago	250,000	Austro-Hungarians advance
Brusilov Offensive	1,600,000	Russians drive back Austro-Hungarians
Somme	1,215,000	Stalemate
Rumanian Campaign	240,000	Rumanian defeat
Italian front	230,000	Stalemate

Total **9,444,208**

Peace feelers rebuffed

Various attempts to find some kind of common ground to begin peace negotiations by both the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey) and the Entente Powers (Britain, France, Russia and Italy) failed during January 1917 owing to incompatibility of war aims. France demanded the restoration of the Alsace and Lorraine regions, which Germany refused to surrender. Russia demanded Constantinople, the Turkish capital, which was naturally highly objectionable to the Turks. Italy and Austria-Hungary also had conflicting territorial requirements.

> “FRANCE DEMANDED THE RESTORATION OF THE ALSACE AND LORRAINE REGIONS”

The German industrialist Hugo Stinnes was part of an attempt in January 1917 by German and Austria-Hungary to see if a negotiated settlement could be attained.

OBITUARY

George Dewey (1837–1917)

George Dewey, the victor of Manila Bay, died at Washington DC on 16 January 1917, aged 79.

Dewey was born in Vermont and graduated from the USNaval Academy in 1858. He was a veteran of Admiral David Farragut’s battle against the rebels in the American Civil War at New Orleans in April 1862, and of the attacks on Fort Fisher in January 1865. After the war he remained in the navy.

In 1897, Dewey, by then a commodore, was given command of the US Asiatic Fleet. As tension between Spain and the United States increased, he sent spies to reconnoitre the locations of the Spanish fleet and fortifications in their Philippine colony. When war came, he sailed into Manila Bay, sank the Spanish naval vessels there and established control of the political situation until American troops arrived in August 1898.

After the war he was eventually promoted to Admiral of the Navy, the only man to hold the rank in American history, and was allowed to remain on active service even past retirement age.

He is survived by his second wife and the son of his first marriage.

British return to Kut

British soldiers recaptured Kut al-Amara on 23 February 1917, where thousands of their comrades had surrendered nearly a year earlier.

When General Sir Frederick Maude took command of British forces in Mesopotamia in July 1916, he spent several months reorganizing and resupplying them. Much effort was put into improving Basra as a base of operations. On 13 December 1916 he began advancing north again towards Turkish positions in the Khadairi Bend, a loop of the Tigris river, which were attacked on 9 January 1917; it took nearly two weeks of hand-to-hand fighting to clear them. A supporting trench network astride the banks of the Hai river, which flowed into the Tigris, was attacked on 11 January and captured on 4 February. The Turks retreated into the Dahra Bend, but on 10 February the British forced them to retreat once more. On 23 February, the British attacked at Shumran and threatened to cut off the Turks on the eastern bank of the Tigris from their base in Baghdad. The withdrawal of these forces opened up the way to Kut and the city fell to the British for the second time, the battle ending on 24 February.

> “THE TURKS RETREATED INTO THE DAHRA BEND, BUT ON 10 FEBRUARY THE BRITISH FORCED THEM TO RETREAT ONCE MORE”

Germany renews unrestricted submarine campaign

The United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany on 3 February 1917 after Germany resumed rampant submarine warfare on 1 February, declaring that any ship in British waters would be subject to attack. The plan had been agreed on 9 January at a conference of war leaders at Pless in Germany and was announced to the United States on 31 January. The previous attempt at this strategy was abandoned after it appeared the United States would enter the war on the side of Britain and France.

During 1916, a combination of heavy military losses and increasing privation among civilians thanks to Britain's highly effective blockade of Germany had revived enthusiasm for unrestricted submarine warfare. At the same time, analysis produced by German naval officers established that a loss rate of 695,000 tons (630,000 tonnes) of merchant shipping would force neutrals to reduce their trade with Britain, causing the British government to sue for peace within six months. This would mean American entry into the war would have little effect. German leaders adopted the verdict at Pless, expecting to force a decision before the harvest of 1917.

A German U-boat torpedoes a merchantman at sea during daylight. The use of unrestricted submarine warfare was Germany's best chance of defeating Britain.

IN BRIEF

- German troops on the Western Front began a strategic withdrawal to a new position between Arras and St Quentin, christened the Hindenburg Line. Experience on the Somme indicated that German entrenchments could be better constructed and organized, and the Hindenburg Line embraced these ideas, as well as offering a strong strategic position from which to fight off future Allied offensives.
- British and Arab troops co-operated to attack the town of Wejh in the Hejaz, an important link on the railway supplying the Turkish garrison in Medina.
- Alexander Kerensky, a Social Revolutionary member of the Russian parliament, spoke in the Duma on 27 February against a peace involving annexations. He later became the Minister of War.

Tsar abdicates, Russia becomes a republic

Tsar Nicholas II of Russia in internal exile following his abdication from power. He was moved to Siberia in August 1917.

Nicholas II, Tsar of all the Russias, abdicated on 15 March 1917. Russia is now under the control of a provisional government containing moderate democrats and socialists. Although the provisional government intends to keep Russia in the war, far Left socialists are arguing for peace.

Workers' strikes, largely in the Petrograd area, had been ongoing since the autumn of 1916. The situation worsened as food shortages occurred in February, causing a strike at the key Putilov armaments factory. When the workers there were fired by management, those in other factories went out on strike in sympathy. Protests beginning on 8 March led to troops being sent to suppress the meetings, but the troops shot their officers instead and joined the protestors. As a result, the Tsar rushed back from the Russian army headquarters, where he had been acting as commander-in-chief. Confronted with the views of his ministers that he ought to abdicate, Nicholas signed the paper on behalf of himself and his son.

German telegram threatens America

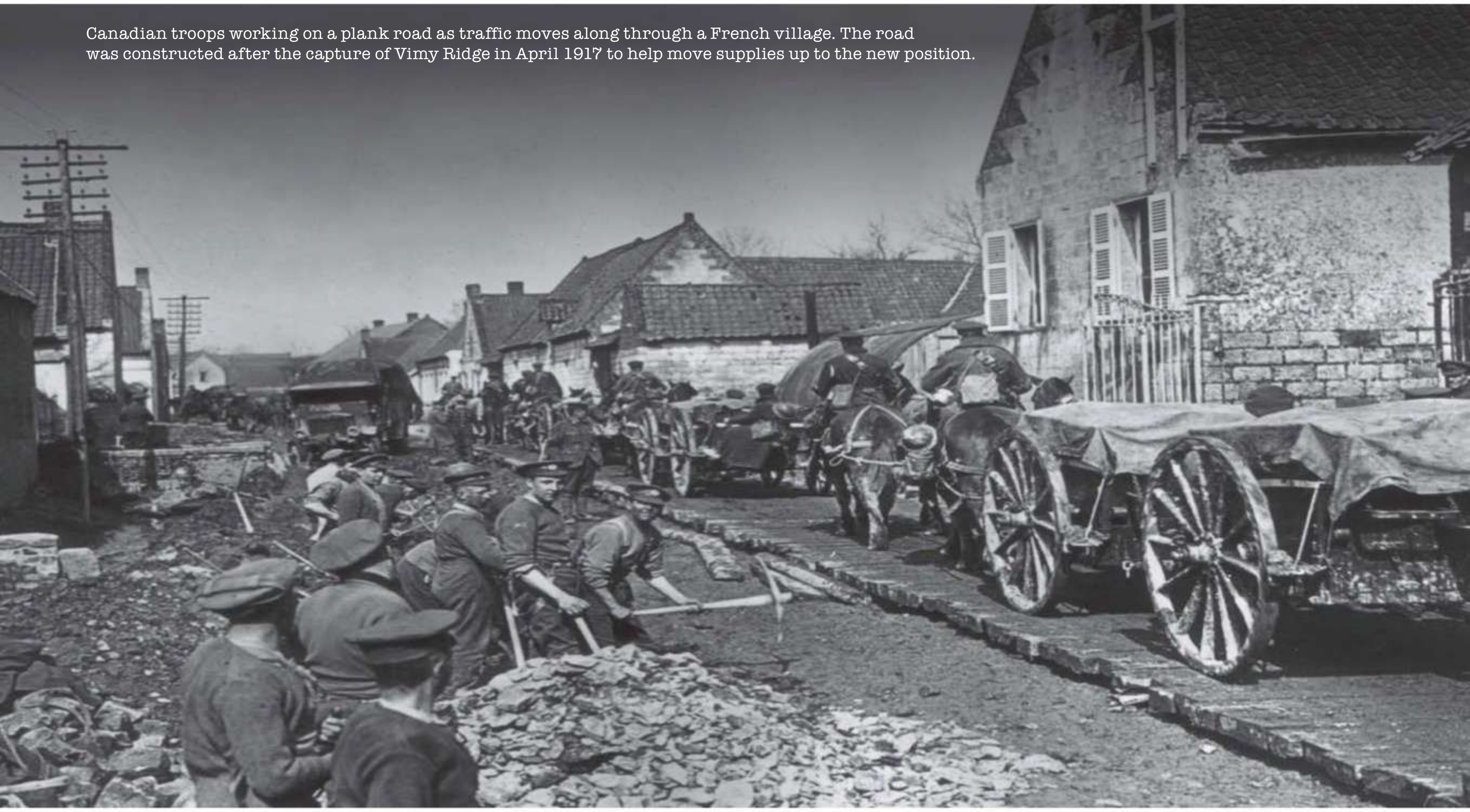
A telegram transmitted by the German foreign secretary, Artur Zimmerman, to the German ambassador in Mexico City, that was released to the press on 1 March 1917, has angered Americans. British code-breakers in the Room 40 unit (the British cryptography unit, originally based in Room 40 in the Admiralty building) had partially cracked the code used by the German foreign office and were able to decipher the Zimmerman telegram. The British foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour, presented it to the American ambassador to London on 23 February.

The telegram stated that while Germany would try to keep America neutral, the ambassador should offer the Mexican president an alliance against the United States conditional on the US declaring war on Germany. Mexico was offered the opportunity to recover territory lost to the US in the nineteenth century.

America declares war

The Congress of the United States voted in favour of a resolution declaring war on Germany on 6 April 1917. The resolution had been requested by President Woodrow Wilson on 2 April, in response to the German resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare. Neither the vote in the Senate nor that in the House of Representatives was unanimous, reflecting a strong anti-war movement that had been a key element in the re-election of Wilson in November 1916 to a second term. The publication of the Zimmerman Telegram had swung opinion among many in favour of war.

With the German resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare in February 1917, Wilson reluctantly accepted America would almost certainly have to enter the war on the Allied side.



Canadian troops working on a plank road as traffic moves along through a French village. The road was constructed after the capture of Vimy Ridge in April 1917 to help move supplies up to the new position.

> “TUNNELS WERE DUG TO ALLOW TROOPS AND SUPPLIES TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE FRONT LINE WITHOUT BEING OBSERVED, AND AN ARTILLERY FIRE PLAN WAS PREPARED”

“Ah, les Canadiens! C’est possible!”

The Canadian Corps of the British Expeditionary Force captured Vimy Ridge from the Germans on 12 April 1917, after four days of fighting following a week-long bombardment. A French soldier is reputed to have remarked on hearing of the ridge’s capture, “C’est impossible.” He then changed his mind when told it was the Canadians who had carried out the attack.

The ridge had remained in German hands despite heavy French and British attacks during 1915, at the cost of 150,000 men. As this was the first operation that would see the four Canadian divisions fighting together as a unit, officers and men were determined to succeed where their allies had failed. The Canadians constructed an elaborate replica of the ridge, on which they trained. Tunnels were dug to allow troops and supplies to be brought into the front line without being observed, and a comprehensive artillery fire plan was prepared.

On the day, the troops performed the “Vimy Glide”, advancing in hundred-yard (90-m) rushes every three minutes, as the barrage moved up the slope. The three German trench lines were captured in hard fighting and most of the ridge was in Canadian hands by the end of the first day of the attack on 9 April. The battle ended on 14 April.

Double defeat at Gaza

The British army was twice defeated in frontal assaults on a Turkish defensive position at Gaza in Palestine on 26 March and 19 April 1917. The second assault was supported by tanks and naval gunfire, yet was repulsed with heavy losses.

The fighting in Palestine is along the only border between the Ottoman empire and the British that separates Egypt and Palestine. The Turks launched an attack on the Suez Canal in 1915, but the British had been warned of their approach by aerial reconnaissance, and the Turks were badly beaten and retreating across a trackless, waterless desert.

After another attempt by the Turks was beaten off in the summer of 1916, the British decided that a policy of forward defence was the best option. A force marched across the Sinai, capturing the fort at Magdhaba on 23 December 1916, before confronting the main Turkish position at Gaza.

Plan Nivelle fails

The offensive planned by the over-confident General Robert Nivelle failed to deliver its hoped-for breakthrough and full-scale attacks were called off on 20 April 1917. The main attacks were between Soissons and Reims, along the Aisne river, and some 1.2 million soldiers were involved.

Nivelle had replaced Marshal Joseph Joffre in December 1916, having built his reputation in the second and third phases of the Battle §of Verdun, where he first made the Germans pay heavily for their gains and then forced them back to their start line, albeit at a heavy cost in French lives. Nivelle placed great faith in the "creeping barrage", which shifted the bombardment forward, isolating the German positions while allowing French soldiers to advance in rushes under the cover of the bombardment.

The plan was an open secret along the halls of government and somewhat controversial. Some French leaders believed Verdun had taken far too much fighting spirit out of the French army to give the project any chance of success. Nivelle's willingness to talk to journalists and carelessness about distribution of the plans meant that the Germans had plenty of warning of the attack and prepared accordingly.

One 16 April, when the attack opened, 40,000 Frenchmen became casualties. The barrage was not executed properly, and the Germans has reduced the number of men in the front line where the barrage fell, knowing in advance the time and place of the attack. Nivelle had promised a breakthrough in 48 hours, but on 17 April the front line had barely even moved.

French soldiers at a listening post in 1917. Listening posts were extensions of the trench line in the direction of the enemy, and were valuable sources of intelligence about enemy plans.

Sickness, casualties and heat halt British attacks in Mesopotamia

General Sir Frederick Maude's offensive in Mesopotamia has been brought to a halt as losses in fighting for the important railway junction of Samarra and, more importantly, too much sickness, necessitated a pause in operations. Samarra finally fell into British hands on 23 April 1917, whereupon Maude announced his intention to delay further operations until after the summer's heat.

The British forces in Mesopotamia occupied Baghdad on 11 March. The Turks attempted to block the British advance at the confluence of the Diyala river and the Tigris, and in fact defeated the first British attack on 9 March. Maude then attempted to outflank the Turks, only to achieve a breakthrough against the original Turkish position which had been largely evacuated in order to counter the British outflanking manoeuvre.

The British continued their attacks on the Turks from Baghdad, resuming their offensive on 13 March. Falluja was captured on 19 March and an abortive attempt was made to surround the retreating Turks. Whenever the Turks tried to make a stand, Maude was either able to manoeuvre them out of position or to cause heavy enough casualties that they were forced to retreat.

> "MAUDE THEN ATTEMPTED TO OUTFLANK THE TURKS, ONLY TO ACHIEVE A BREAKTHROUGH AGAINST THE ORIGINAL TURKISH POSITION WHICH HAD BEEN LARGELY EVACUATED"

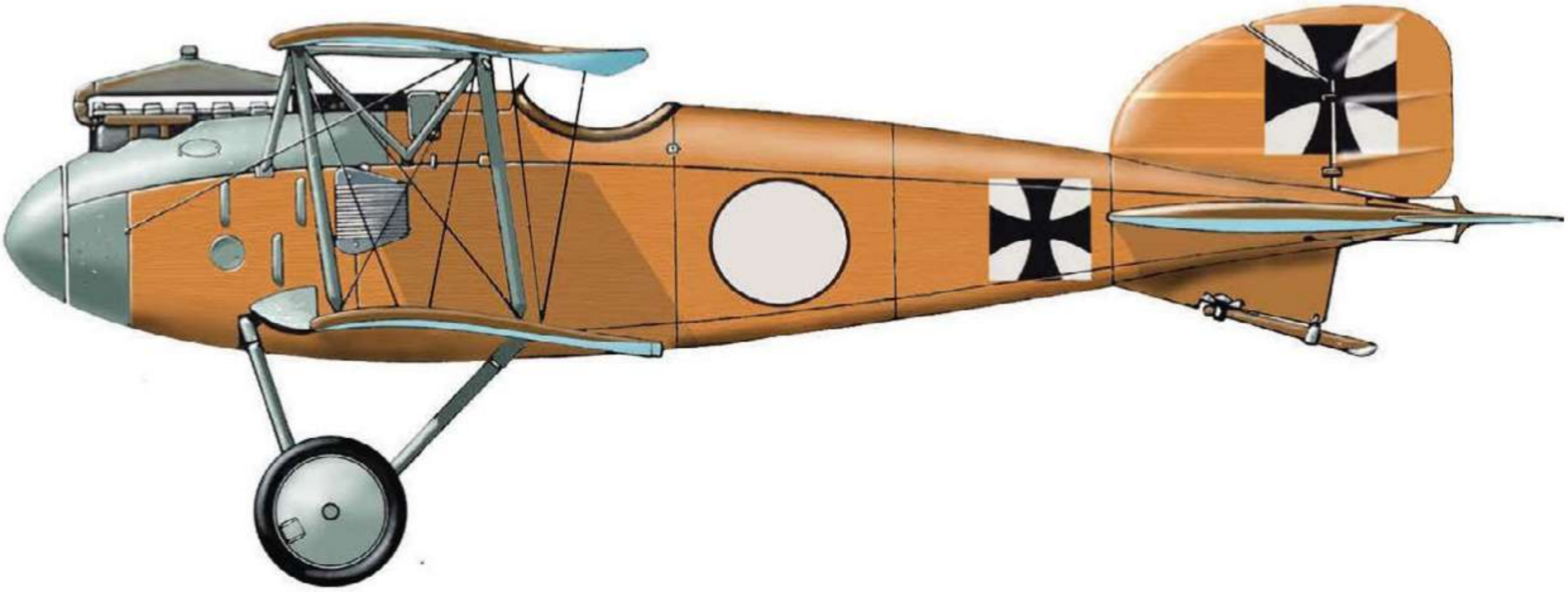
Crisis in the Atlantic

The German submarine blockade of the British Isles seriously threatened the British capacity to wage war in its first three months of operation in 1917. In February, 520,000 tons (530,000 tonnes) of shipping were sunk, in March 560,000 tons (570,000 tonnes) and in April 860,000 tons (875,000 tonnes). By contrast, from November 1916 to January 1917, the total tonnage of shipping sunk amounted to only 916,000 (930,000 tonnes). German analysts calculated that such loss rates would rapidly bring Britain to her knees, owing to a poor wheat harvest in North America in 1916.

A troop convoy en route to Europe from the United States. The introduction of a convoy system for merchant as well as military vessels, brought the crisis in submarine warfare to an end.

"Bloody April" for Royal Flying Corps

The battle for command of the air over the Western Front has taken a serious turn for the worse for the British Royal Flying Corps. The Imperial German Air Service received new Albatros D.IIs and D.IIIs last autumn, aircraft that were markedly superior to the Nieuport XVII, Spad VIII and Bristol F.2 Fighter, all aircraft in service with the Allies. When the Royal Flying Corps began operations in support of the British offensive at Vimy Ridge and around Arras in April 1917, involving many reconnaissance flights and fighter patrols, German aerial supremacy quickly established itself. Of some 365 aircraft deployed by the British, 245 of them were lost, two-thirds of the total. One squadron, Jasta 11, led by Manfred, Baron von Richthofen, claimed about a third of these victims.



An Albatros fighter aircraft of the Imperial German Air Service. The Albatros was the main fighter aircraft used during the years 1916–17.

Mutiny

The French army was badly affected by mutiny in May 1917, as nearly three years of heavy casualties sapped the troops' willingness to fight. The scale of casualties suffered so far has taken a heavy toll of the nation which had so effectively mobilized its male population to fight the war. In 1914, 754,000 Frenchmen became casualties; in 1915, the total exceeded a million; and in 1916 another million were added to the list. Yet all this sacrifice had produced little apparent change – the German army still occupied about the same area of France that it had at the end of 1914. There was no sign that German morale was near breaking point, nor any sense that one more attack on them would win the war.

The Nivelle offensive of April 1917 seemed to French soldiers to be their last chance. General Robert Nivelle himself had been highly optimistic of success, predicting a breakthrough in 48 hours and there was good reason for the soldiers to believe that Nivelle did have some kind of secret formula, with his combination of specially trained troops and the creeping barrage. The troops who had been taken out of the line to undergo training had been told that many more guns than ever before would be used to support them and were aware that more troops than ever before were being massed on a narrow front; in some sectors of the front they even saw that the newfangled armoured fighting vehicles – tanks – were being deployed with them. Yet crossing no-man's-land to find the wire uncut yet again, and realizing the Germans had been expecting them all along – thanks to the discovery of a copy of the plan by German trench raiders – shattered the last hopes French soldiers had in their leaders. They had warned of 10,000 casualties on the first day; the men suffered ten times that. They had promised a 6-mile (10-km) advance; the soldiers went 600 yards (550 m).

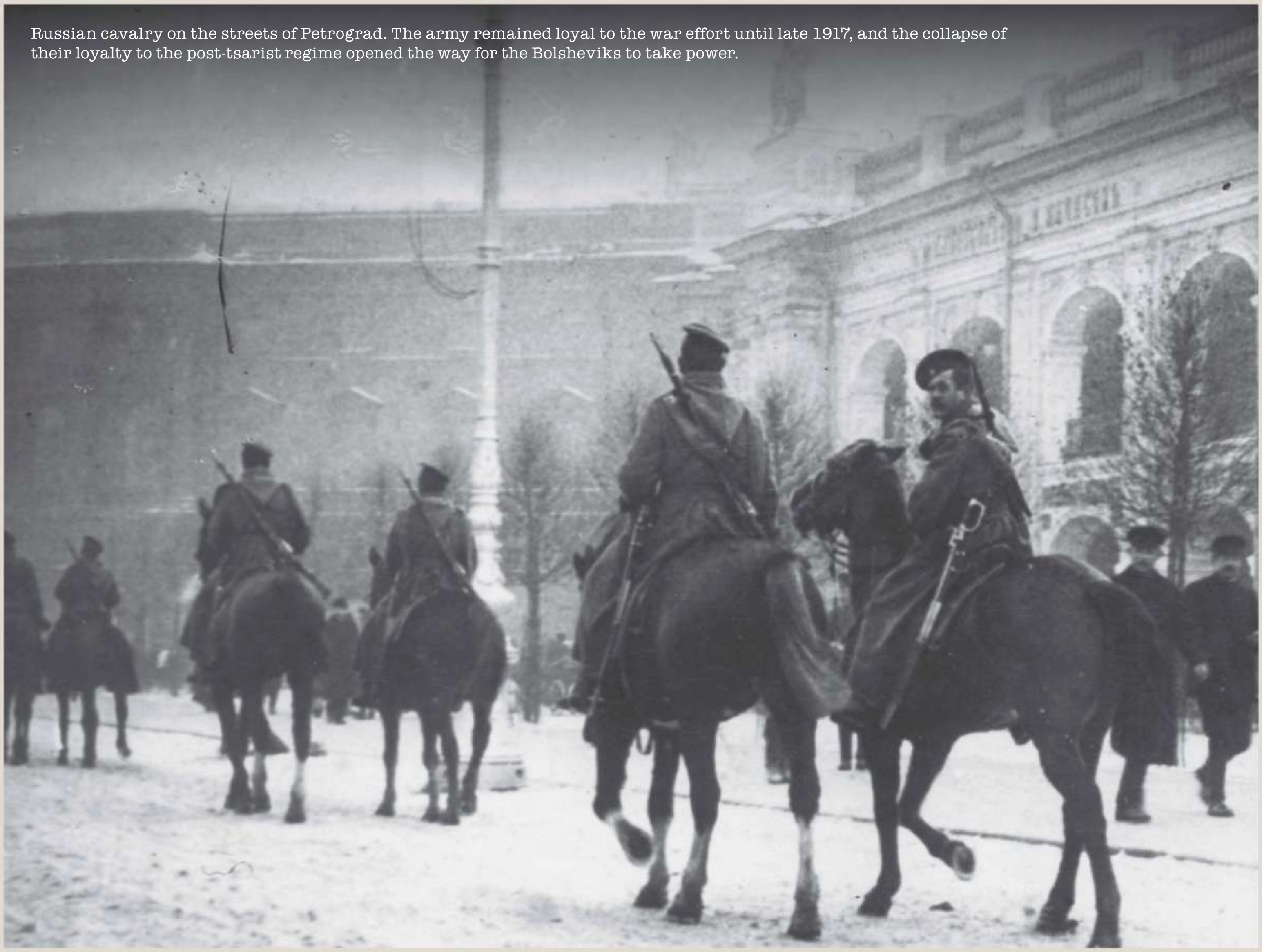
Troops being rotated out of the front line after the attack warned those replacing them that nothing had changed and that they were marching toward likely death. Officers became aware in the rear areas that the troops were behaving unusually sullenly, finding more solace in drink than normal. One battalion refused to return when their expected assignment to a quiet sector turned into a return to the scene of battle where they had just lost three-quarters of their strength. On 3 May, a whole division refused to attack. They would defend their trenches, but they saw no point in an assault that meant death or maiming for so many.

Firing squads were used to enforce discipline in armies during the American Civil War, although desertion rather than mutiny was more likely to be the cause of a capital charge in that conflict.

Russian example

Throughout May and June mutinous conduct persisted in the French army. The recent example of the Russian army, which had joined with Petrograd workers to overthrow the tsarist regime, gave inspiration to some agitators, although the troops were unable to convert their dissatisfaction into anything approaching revolution. Most of the mutinies amounted to little more than protest marches, although the situation was alarming to French leaders. What perhaps saved France was the existence of a Zone of the Army around the front where the soldiers were stationed, either in the front line or in rest and training camps in the rear. The revolutionary impulse was contained in this zone. Thus, what was a source of grievance to the troops, who resented their isolation from the rest of France, may well have saved the country from the kind of revolution that was under way in Russia.

General Philippe Pétain, who replaced General Nivelle at the end of April, worked very hard to stop the mutiny from expanding beyond the stage of a statement of grievances. He arranged for changes to French military practices which had allowed a somewhat tortuous process leading to the execution of mutineers. Instead, a system of rapid trial, sentencing and execution was employed. Great leniency was shown to units that returned to military discipline, with "only" five or so per company being shot. However, rumours persisted of a whole battalion being shelled by French guns, which hinted at a ruthless iron hand in a studded-leather glove. Pétain also took care of a number of other grievances that the men had expressed, as well as promising that future attacks would be for more limited objectives and would show greater concern for the lives of the men. Pétain had to solve a problem that all armies



Russian cavalry on the streets of Petrograd. The army remained loyal to the war effort until late 1917, and the collapse of their loyalty to the post-tsarist regime opened the way for the Bolsheviks to take power.

experience to one degree or another in war. All the Allied armies were affected by mutiny in one way or another during 1917. The British experienced trouble at the camp at Étaples, while the Russian army brought about the downfall of their government.

Danger at hand

Mutinies represent the most extreme manifestation of discontent on the part of soldiers. When military discipline breaks down, a dangerous situation threatens. A body of armed men, trained to be resolute in the face of danger, can do much to upset civil society. A mutiny represents an organized rejection of military discipline, which means that the mutineers may well not have abandoned the military structure, but are prepared to turn it to their own purposes. Fortunately, other types of indiscipline are far more common and a well-officered army can avoid mutiny by handling the early symptoms with the correct combination of harshness and sympathy.

Desertion represents the rejection of military discipline by individuals or small groups of soldiers, who flee the camp to escape the authority of the armed forces. Desertion is an index of an army's discontent. During the First World War, the rate of desertion from the French army offered an index to the mounting crisis that resulted in the April mutinies: in 1914 there were 409 desertions; in 1915, 2,433; in 1916, nearly 9,000; and in 1917, 21,871.

Firing squad

Desertion is normally treated harshly, especially when it takes place near or on the battlefield, when execution is the traditional punishment. During the American Civil War, executions for desertion were not uncommon. The problem confronting officers in the field concerns distinguishing desertion from the more common, but somewhat less dangerous threat to military discipline represented by "skulking" – the act of hiding from battle. A skulker is a soldier who can potentially be returned to duty, for he remains close to the men he fights with, whereas a deserter is trying to leave them behind.

However, desertion far behind the lines was normally and appropriately treated more leniently, and probably many cases of desertion were hidden under the rubric of "absent without leave" or some other less severe charge. Prison was the normal punishment, although other punishments might have been employed. Much depended on the temperament of the officers in charge, and Pétain's generous handling of the soldiers' grievances excused much of the peremptory nature of such executions as did take place.

A barrage of shells crashes into Messines Ridge. The carefully planned attack on the German positions achieved a dramatic success.

Blast heard in London heralds offensive in Belgium

A British attack on German positions at Messines Ridge in Flanders successfully captured the high ground and held out against all German counter-attacks until these were called off on 14 June. One key reason for the success of the attack lay in the detonation of a series of large mines under the German trenches, creating a rumble heard across the Channel in London.

The operation was the brainchild of General Sir Herbert Plumer, who ordered digging to commence in the summer of 1916, 22 mine shafts being sunk under the German lines. Both British and German engineers were digging under the ridge, the latter in an attempt to stop the British. The Germans did discover one mine, but the British succeeded in completing the others which extended right under the German position.

The now traditional lengthy artillery attack began on 21 May and continued until 2.50 a.m. early in the morning of 7 June. 20 minutes later, 19 of the 21 mines were detonated. It was the largest artificial explosion in the war so far and blew the crest off the ridge. The British attackers found only dazed Germans in their trenches and reached all their limited objectives on the first day. The German counter-attacks starting on 8 June were unexpectedly unsuccessful, total casualties were higher for the Germans than for the French and British units: 25,000 to 17,000.

At first gains, then stalemate at Arras

A British offensive timed to divert German reserves away from General Robert Nivelle's planned attack in the Champagne was finally brought to an end on 23 May 1917, showing limited gains overall, in spite of early successes. The focus of the attack was on German trench lines either side of the town of Arras, where the new German Hindenburg Line met the old trench system in Flanders.

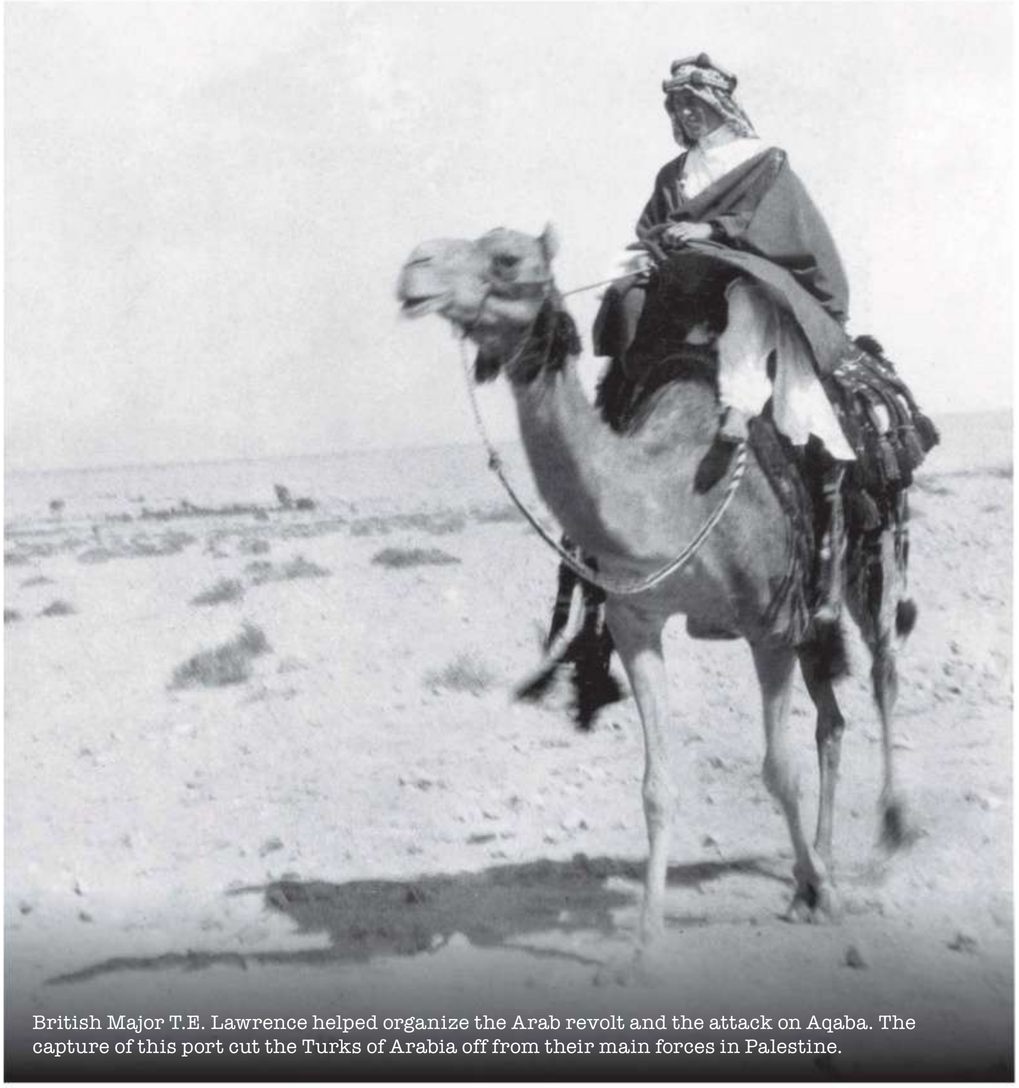
The attack was preceded by a week-long artillery bombardment that was far more successful than hitherto at cutting the barbed wire in front of the German trenches, mainly due to better fuses and more shells being made available. When the main attack went over the top on 9 April, the British made some of their furthest advances of the war on the Western Front to date – up to 4½ miles (7 km). On 12 April, a "massed" attack at Bullecourt involving 11 tanks and Australian troops was astonishingly successful at first, although the British did not realize that the Germans had deep dugouts from which flank attacks were made, capturing many of the Australians. In spite of these early successes, the British were unable to sustain the momentum beyond the initial week and Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig spent the next month ordering small-scale subsidiary attacks until calling the offensive off.

> "A "MASSED" ATTACK AT BULLECOURT INVOLVING 11 TANKS AND AUSTRALIAN TROOPS WAS ASTONISHINGLY SUCCESSFUL AT FIRST, ALTHOUGH THE BRITISH DID NOT REALIZE THAT THE GERMANS HAD DEEP DUGOUTS FROM WHICH FLANK ATTACKS WERE MADE"

Arabs capture Aqaba

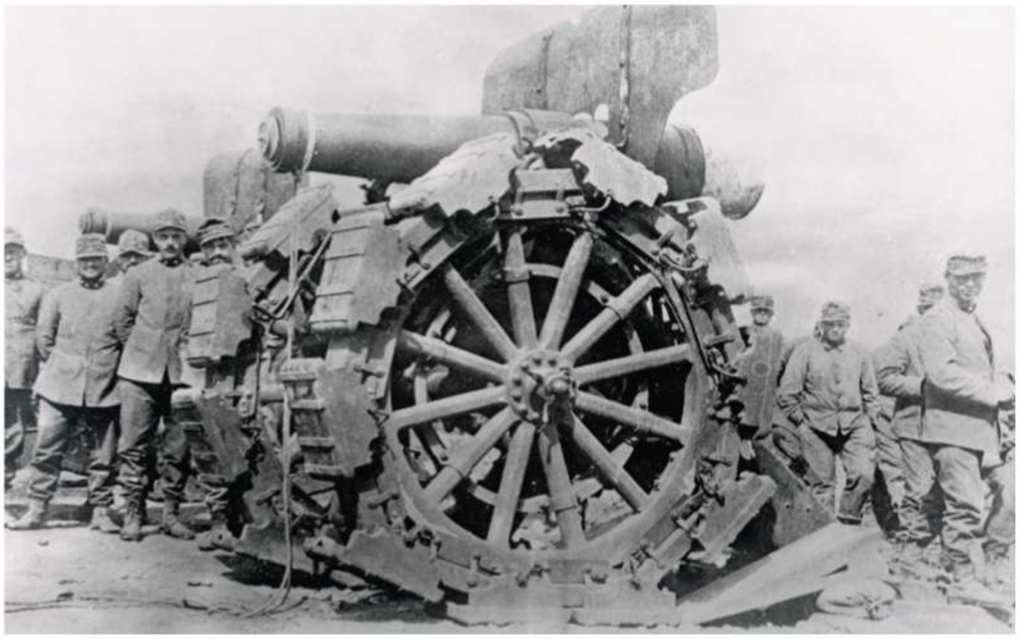
The port city of Aqaba, on the gulf of the same name, was captured by Arab irregulars led by the British officer Colonel T.E. Lawrence on 6 July 1917. Turkish troops garrisoning the city were in a position to attack the supply routes to Egypt used by British forces outside Gaza. When Lawrence visited Aqaba before the War he learned that the main Turkish defences were in the Wadi Itm, with the aim of stopping anyone who seized the port from moving inland. He realized that a force moving inland on a wide sweep through the desert could approach Wadi Itm from the rear and capture the defences, thereby seizing Aqaba itself. Lawrence, with about 30 Arabs, left Wejh and crossed the desert to Wadi Sirhan, where he used 20,000 gold sovereigns to buy an army of 500 Arab irregulars – enough to surprise the Turks and capture Aqaba.

> “HE USED 20,000 GOLD SOVEREIGNS TO BUY AN ARMY OF 500 ARAB IRREGULARS”



British Major T.E. Lawrence helped organize the Arab revolt and the attack on Aqaba. The capture of this port cut the Turks of Arabia off from their main forces in Palestine.

To and fro, stale-mate on the Isonzo



An initially successful Italian offensive, was called off on 8 June 1917, having been driven more or less back to its start line. The Tenth Battle of the Isonzo had opened on 12 May, as Italian guns pounded Austro-Hungarian trenches. The Italian commander, General Luigi Cadorna, returned to his original idea of advancing on a broad front, instead of his 1916 style of concentrated punches. Several mountains were captured, but the Austro-Hungarians kept control of the Tolmino bridgehead and beat off an attack on the Carso, a stony plateau where ricocheting bullets sent showers of rocky splinters over the troops on both sides. Total casualties amounted to over 200,000, 60 per cent of them being Italian.

Italian troops with heavy guns. The Italian attacks begun in May 1917 accomplished small gains, but no strategic breakthrough was made.

Wet weather hampers British attack

After three weeks of fighting ending on 18 August 1917, the British army made small gains in Flanders, complicated by a wet August and ground that is in any case reclaimed marshland.

Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, the commander of the British Expeditionary Force in France, launched the campaign around Ypres intending to distract the Germans from taking advantage of the disciplinary problems of the French army, as well as offering the possibility of threatening German U-boat bases on the Belgian coast. The bombardment began on 18 July, the heaviest and longest of the war so far, the shells ripping up an ancient system of drainage that had hitherto kept the reclaimed marshland between Ypres and Passchendaele reasonably dry. The ground soon turned into an appalling quagmire that was to cause the attacking British serious problems throughout the offensive.

The infantry attacks began on 31 July, on a front of approximately 14 miles (22 km). The length of the bombardment had made the Germans well aware of the location of the attack and they had reinforced their troops in the area. In spite of these difficulties the British achieved some success, although at a cost of 32,000 casualties. These dead and wounded bought an advance of up to 2,000 yards, (1,830 m) as Pilckem Ridge to the north of Ypres was captured. After two days of fighting, it began to rain and these heavy downpours continued as August has had double the normal monthly rainfall.

A few days of drier weather in mid-month allowed the renewal of the offensive around Langemarck. The rain made it difficult to put supporting guns into position and wooden platforms had to be constructed to keep them from sinking into the mud. Similarly-built plank roads were the only means of bringing up reinforcements, although they were especially easy for German artillery to target. After two days of fighting, the wet weather and lack of success convinced Haig to shift responsibility away from the Fifth Army of General Sir Hubert Gough to the Second Army of General Sir Herbert Plumer, which has led to a pause in offensive action.

A British stretcher party struggles to bring a casualty through the muddy fields of Flanders, as heavy rains and damaged drainage systems create a quagmire.

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES

DATES:	July-November 1916
COMBATANTS:	France and Britain vs Germany
CASUALTIES:	Allies, 325,000; Germany, 260,000
RESULT:	Stalemate

Italians finally gain ground

General Luigi Cadorna halted his eleventh offensive along the Isonzo on 12 September 1917 after over three weeks of fighting brought the kind of success he had expected to achieve in the previous ten attempts. The Italian troops had gone beyond the point where they could easily be resupplied or supported by artillery. For the Austro-Hungarians, Cadorna's halt offered a welcome breathing space.

Cadorna assembled his largest force to date for this offensive, deploying over 50 divisions and 5,000 artillery pieces. The attacks began on 17 August with two main thrusts, one around Gorizia and in the plateau of the Carso, the other far to north at the Tolmino bridgehead. Both proved to be successes, although the more northerly push achieved far greater territorial gains, advancing in places to a depth of over 6 miles (10 km).

Change of command brings progress at Ypres

German prisoners captured during the battle for Ypres.

New tactics have brought some success to the British as the fighting around Ypres resumed after a period of dry weather. Operations aimed at limited targets along the Menin Road and Polygon Wood were begun on 20 September and have made rapid headway using new tactical methods than the older systems had produced.

The commander of the Second Army, General Sir Herbert Plumer, has been instructing his divisions in combined arms tactics to tackle the German defensive system, after the old methods had led to extremely heavy casualties in the fighting at the Somme. The Germans now use a system of defence in depth, with a forward line of outposts, preferably in the form of concrete pillboxes, supported by trench lines behind, from which counter-attacks can be organized against any breaches in the outpost line.

Plumer's tactics involve sending a skirmish line forward, followed by small teams of infantry equipped with grenades and light machine guns. These groups attack pillboxes or other strongpoints from the flanks, while the troops in the skirmish line identify the same objectives and offer a degree of fire support to the attacking groups. Machine guns and artillery are intended to offer support to break up the inevitable German counter-attacks that follow any loss of ground to British or French attacks.

A British soldier receives medical treatment at a field hospital. The stretcher has been placed on a pair of trestles to provide a rudimentary bed.

Advance at Broodseinde, then rain halts offensive

General Sir Herbert Plumer's Second Army made some important advances in attacks on 4 October and 9 October, before the weather once again intervened to halt the British in the Ypres salient. Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig has conferred with his commanders and set an ultimate objective of Passchendaele Ridge for the offensive.

The Germans had been worried by the previous attacks on the Menin Road and at Polygon Wood, which had seen their defensive front line fall more easily than they had anticipated and their counter-attacks to be readily broken up by artillery supporting the British infantry. Therefore, they had reinforced their front line at Broodseinde, which merely resulted in heavier casualties from the British bombardment. Plumer's "bite and hold" approach did not aim at achieving a breakthrough, but instead sought to make gains that kept the advancing infantry within range of the supporting artillery. The combination of the revised German tactics and the British limited objectives was turning the battles into attritional combats.

The offensive on 4 October secured some important gains around Broodseinde, while on 9 October the village of Poelcapelle fell to the British.

British anti-aircraft gunners prepare to fire their weapon.

Germans depart their East African colony

Kashmiri gunners in East Africa. The British force in German East Africa drew heavily on Imperial troops, especially from the African colonies and India.

After a struggle against the British imperial troops lasting nearly two years, the German field army in German East Africa abandoned their colony for Portuguese Mozambique, following fighting at Mahiwa on 15-18 October 1917. The German commander, Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, used Portugal's declaration of war against Germany as a justification for raiding the Portuguese colony, where he secured supplies and avoided the considerable British army that had been deployed against him.

Lettow-Vorbeck had repeatedly beaten the British in his campaigns, using an army largely of African askari native troops. In 1914, he had delivered a crushing defeat against a British landing at Tanga, while in 1915 he won a second victory at Jassin. Lettow-Vorbeck preferred to fight a guerrilla war thereafter, as the casualties he suffered at Jassin uncomfortably exceeded his easy victory at Tanga.

The British had made considerable territorial gains in 1916, but had still not defeated Lettow-Vorbeck in the field. At the end of that year, General Jan Smuts, the South African commander of the British Imperial forces in East Africa, had driven Lettow-Vorbeck south, but could not achieve final victory despite his forces outnumbering the Germans by eight to one. The elusive Lettow-Vorbeck remained at large throughout 1917, while Smuts declared imminent victory and departed for London.

Lettow-Vorbeck finally stood and fought at Mahiwa, where 5,000 British soldiers, many of them King's African Rifles, attacked 1,500 troops under Lettow-Vorbeck. The battled lasted three days and the Germans inflicted some 1,600 casualties on the British while suffering a minor loss of 100 of their own.

Ships clash in Gulf of Riga

A German landing on the islands in the mouth of the Gulf of Riga has succeeded in clearing the Russian fleet from its advanced base in the area.

The Russians had constructed batteries on Ösel island, the largest in the archipelago, before the war, blocking the southernmost entrance to the gulf. Moon island, on the eastern shore of Ösel island, blocked the northernmost entrance. Seeking to control both these islands and thereby trap part of the Russian fleet in Riga, German battleships bombarded the batteries on Ösel island on 12 October. Troops landed under the cover of the bombardment and succeeded in isolating the Russian batteries.

The Ösel island batteries surrendered to the Germans on 15 October, allowing the German navy to use most of its ships for an attack on Moon island, where two German dreadnoughts clashed with two smaller Russian battleships and an armoured cruiser. The greater firepower of the Germans was too much for the Russian vessels, one of which was sunk while two were badly damaged and fled northwards to the Gulf of Finland.

The naval war in the Baltic was one of small vessels and landings.

Dancer shot as spy

Mata Hari's exotic reputation preceded the war. She was shot by firing squad on 15 October 1917, and passed into legend.

The Dutch dancer Margarethe McLeod (née Zelle), better known by her stage name of Mata Hari, was executed by firing squad as a German spy on 15 October 1917. Mata Hari was born in the Netherlands and spent several years with her husband in the Dutch East Indies. When the couple returned to Europe, she divorced her husband and took up a career in 1905 as an exotic dancer using the name Mata Hari. She had a number of lovers with links to military circles and was in Germany just before the war, as a result of which she was dogged by rumours that she was a spy. In Spain during 1916 she became involved in swapping information between German and French spymasters, as neither side fully trusted her. On 13 February 1917, the French arrested her. She was tried in July, found guilty and received the death sentence.

Passchendaele falls, ending campaign of misery

Canadian forces captured the village of Passchendaele on 6 November 1917, giving the British Expeditionary Force control of Passchendaele Ridge. The British Second Army launched two offensives in October, although a period of wet weather made moving through the mud of Flanders' fields extremely difficult during this fighting.

The first attack was made around Poelcapelle on 12 October, but little ground was gained and casualties were heavy.

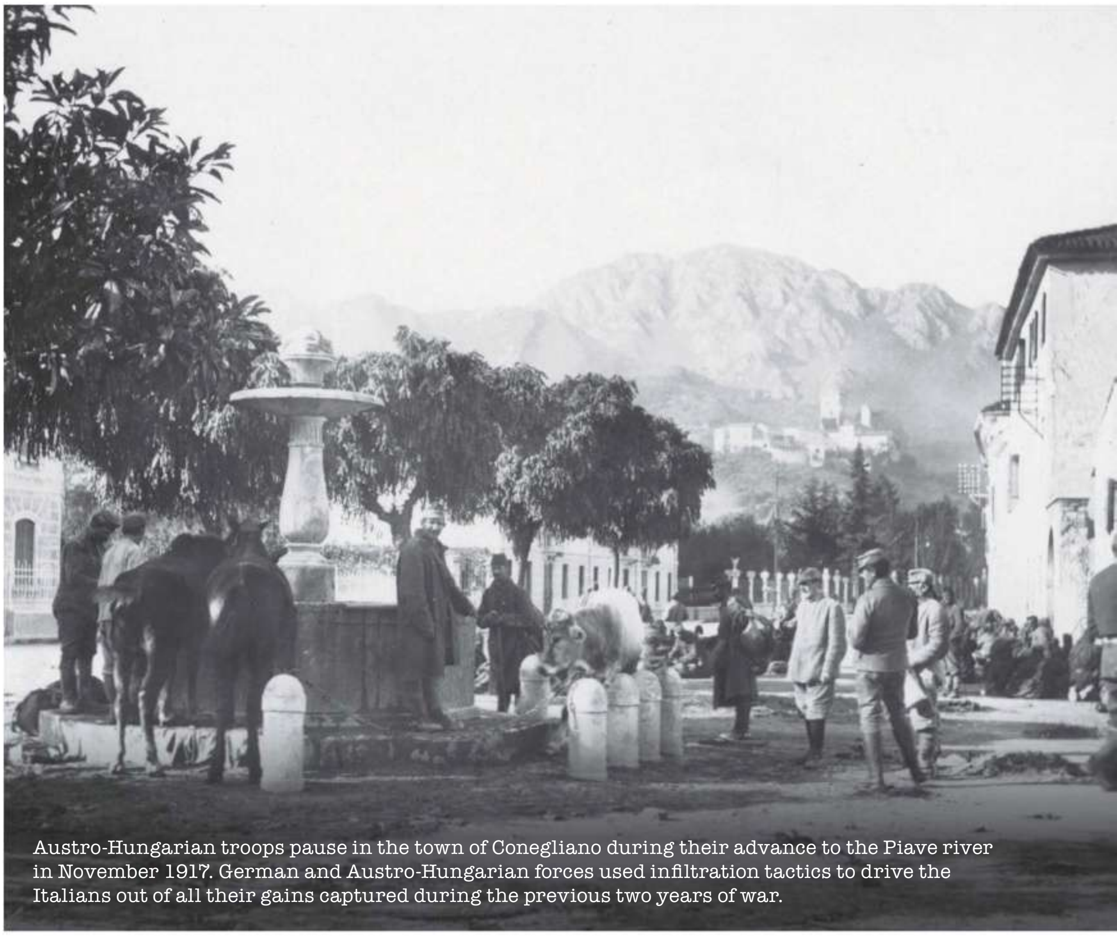
British attacks were resumed on 30 October, again with little to show in terms of ground gained, until on 6 November the Canadian troops finally secured the village and Passchendaele Ridge, capturing the objectives from the Bavarian troops defending them.

Marxists seize power in Russia

The Petrograd Soviet (or council) of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies seized power on 7 November 1917 in a coup that overthrew the Provisional Government which had ruled Russia since the abdication of the Tsar in March. The Provisional Government had kept the country in the war against the Germans, giving the radical leftists of the Soviet a useful propaganda tool. In July, the same left-wingers, led by the Bolshevik Party leader Vladimir Lenin, had attempted to overthrow the government. Using soldiers and workers' militia, they seized many key installations in Petrograd and successfully attacked the Winter Palace.

> "THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY LEADER VLADIMIR LENIN, HAD ATTEMPTED TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT"

Caporetto, a black day for Italy



Austro-Hungarian troops pause in the town of Conegliano during their advance to the Piave river in November 1917. German and Austro-Hungarian forces used infiltration tactics to drive the Italians out of all their gains captured during the previous two years of war.

The Italian army suffered a massive defeat on the Isonzo front. A combined German and Austro-Hungarian offensive unleashed on 24 October 1917 has driven Italian troops not only out of all their gains won with such difficulty over two years of fighting on the Isonzo front, but also well back into Italy. Treviso and Venice are now threatened with occupation by enemy troops, as the front line has been along the line of the Piave river since 12 November.

The success of the Italian army in the Eleventh Battle of the Isonzo back in August alarmed the Germans, who had found the Austro-Hungarian army a weak partner during the fighting against the Russians on the Eastern Front. German soldiers arrived at the Italian front and when the Italian commander, General Luigi Cadorna, learned of this through aerial surveys, he called off an offensive planned for late September.

The collapse of a serious Russian effort on the Eastern Front allowed the transfer of nine German divisions, six of which put in their main assault in the vicinity of the town of Caporetto. The Germans used gas shells which wreaked havoc among the Italian artillery and enabled their infantry to move forward with relatively few casualties from what shelling the Italians could manage. The Germans also used a very short bombardment, lasting about two hours, unlike the traditional one over several days before an offensive. The Germans also used the storm troop tactics they had practised on the Eastern Front, with companies advancing with little regard for maintaining touch with their comrades on the flanks, and tackling strong points by using machine guns to keep the Italians' heads down, while troops armed with grenades worked around the flanks to destroy the position.

The Germans succeeded in destroying the Italian defences in a couple of days, taking some 270,000 prisoners, thereby starting an all-out retreat that lasted until 11 November. Cadorna was dismissed on 7 November and was replaced by General Armando Diaz.

Tanks and storm troops clash at Cambrai

A British offensive and a German counter-offensive around Cambrai left the front line almost entirely unchanged when the fighting ended on 3 December 1917. However, the use of massed tank formations when the British attacked on 20 November, and the German employment of elite assault troops in their counter-offensive launched on 30 November, made this two-week period one of the most mobile on the Western Front since the first trenches were dug in 1914.

The British offensive took place on a 5-mile (9-km) front between the Canal du Nord and the St Quentin Canal, using 19 divisions, with 200 tanks in the first wave and over 400 overall. The British achieved a major breakthrough on the first day, although the Germans held out in some key locations, such as Flesquières, and demonstrated the effectiveness of artillery against tanks. The main objective of Bourlon Ridge was still being contested on 28 November when the British called off their offensive.

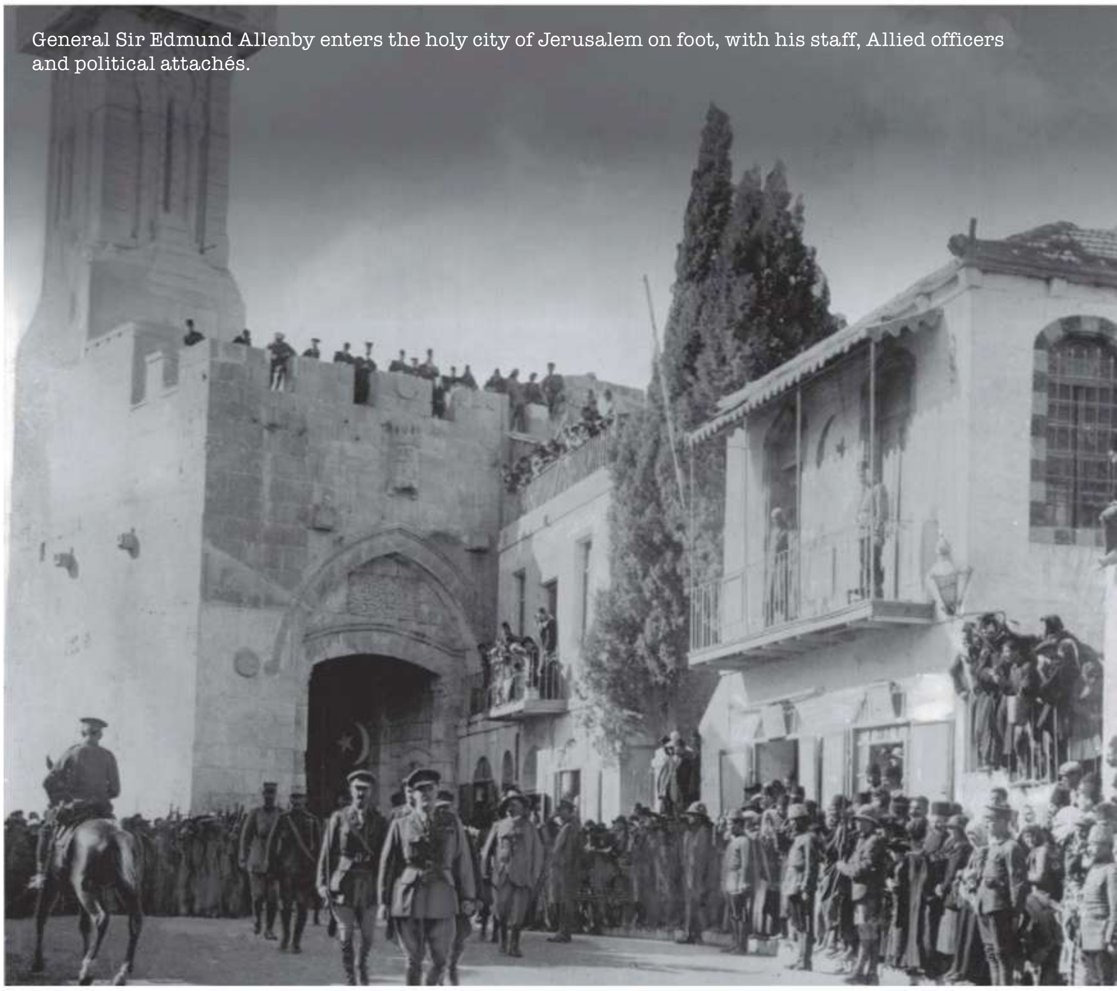
The German response contrasted with the British technological advantage by using more sophisticated infantry and artillery tactics which proved devastatingly effective and achieved their breakthrough more rapidly than the British tanks. In the end, the battle was a major disappointment for the British, whose early success produced no lasting gains.

> “THE BRITISH ACHIEVED A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH ON THE FIRST DAY”

Allenby breaks through at Gaza

General Sir Edmund Allenby's Egyptian Expeditionary Force succeeded in breaking through the Turkish defensive line that was anchored on the coastal town of Gaza, and eventually captured Jerusalem on 9 December 1917.

The attack at Gaza was launched on 31 October with a cavalry attack at Beersheeba, by a mostly Australian force. The Turks had not suspected anything, having been deceived by British to thinking that the main blow would fall on the coast. On 2 November, British operations against the Gaza trench lines began with a night-time infantry assault. The British advance attained a depth of 2 miles (3 km) while at the same time repeated attacks were made on the other end of the Turkish line, pushed back from Beersheeba to El Khuweilfe. By 6 November, the Turkish line had been breached and the Turks abandoned it on 8 November. The pursuit continued until Jerusalem was reached and captured.


General Sir Edmund Allenby enters the holy city of Jerusalem on foot, with his staff, Allied officers and political attachés.

IN BRIEF

On 2 November, British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour issued a typed letter, addressed to Lord Rothschild, to give to the Zionist Federation. Balfour stated in this letter: “His Majesty's Government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people … it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.” It represented the handing over of territory Britain did not own to people who did not live there, and was incompatible with statements being made by the British government to Arab leaders at the time.

Russian Soviets comes to terms with Germany

On 3 March 1918, Germany and her allies signed a peace treaty with the revolutionary government of Russia, at the city of Brest-Litovsk. Negotiations began on 22 December 1917, but had been interrupted at several points, mainly to allow the Russian delegates to return to Petrograd to debate the terms under discussion. In February 1918, the armistice was terminated by the Germans, who for a few days resumed military operations against Russian forces until the Russians agreed to resume talks. The treaty pushed the western border of Russia eastwards, creating an independent Ukraine, renouncing Russian rights over Courland and Lithuania and a part of Belorussia, and allowing German troops to occupy Latvia and Estonia. Parts of the Caucasus were conceded to Turkey, notably Kars and Batum. The Russian government also accepted the requirement to pay for the feeding and housing of Russian prisoners of war, but no other financial penalties were required.

Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin was brought from Switzerland to Russia by the Germans in the hope that he would succeeded in disrupting the Russian war effort.

Allied reaction to the treaty was one of alarm. The Provisional Government, overthrown by the Bolsheviks and their allies in November 1917, had kept Russia in the war, even though the Russians conducted little offensive action. The Bolsheviks had instead taken Russia out of the war, releasing thousands of German troops for duty on the Western Front.

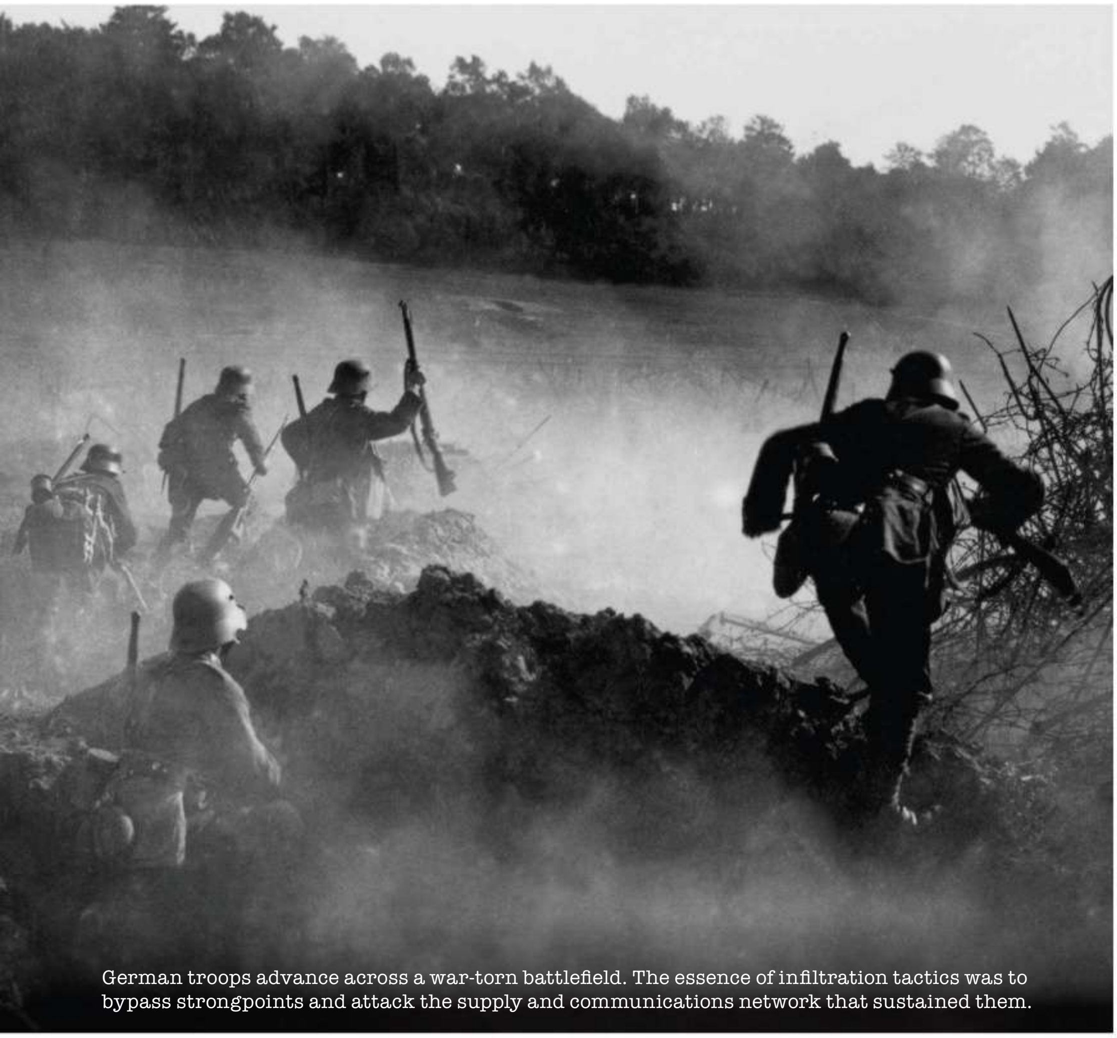
Russian and German negotiators at Brest-Litovsk. The Soviet government conceded much to the Germans because ultimately they believed the Germans would lose the war in the West.

IN BRIEF

- The Germans began shelling Paris on 21 March 1918 using a long 210mm artillery weapon called the Kaiser Wilhelm Gun. The shells fired by this huge railway gun attained a height of 20 miles (32 km), and a range of 80 miles (129 km).
- Manfred, Baron von Richthofen, was killed in action on 23 April 1918, while flying near Bapaume, France. Canadian pilot Captain Roy Brown was credited with the victory, but two Australian machine gunners, Popkin and Weston, were also given credit for bringing down the "Red Baron".
- The British Dover Patrol naval force attacked the port of Zeebrugge in Belgium, together with Royal Marines, on 23 April 1918. The purpose of the raid was to sink three blockships in a canal that linked the coast with Brugge inland, which was being used as a base for U-boats. The innovative operation made use of a converted cruiser, HMS Vindictive, to deliver the Royal Marines to the harbour mole.

Baron von Richtofen was made a celebrity on the German home front to popularise the war.

Germans call off "Michael"



German troops advance across a war-torn battlefield. The essence of infiltration tactics was to bypass strongpoints and attack the supply and communications network that sustained them.

The German army on the Western Front called off Operation Michael, an offensive against the British Third and Fifth Armies, on 5 April 1918. The Germans had used troops transferred from the Eastern Front in an attempt to break through the British lines and swing north to capture the town of Arras. However, they have fallen short of this objective.

The methods used in the autumn at Cambrai by the Germans were employed in this attack. The assault plan envisaged a short, highly intense bombardment that would target communications and headquarters, then artillery positions and finally the front line; this would be followed by an infantry assault that was spearheaded by units bypassing any centres of resistance to get into the enemy's rear zones.

The first day saw big gains in the Fifth Army sector, where thick fog aided the Germans, but lesser ones against the Third Army, although in both cases the Germans fell short of their first-day objectives. However, by this time the British command system was in disarray, with orders from higher echelons such as corps taking a long time to reach lower-echelon divisions and brigades, and often being out of date by the time they arrived. By nightfall on 23 March, the Germans appeared to have torn a large gap in the British lines, but weariness began to affect them. As long as fresh troops could be fed into the line, the German advance continued apace. After three days of fighting in some places the assault troops were finding distractions in the food and drink available in British supply dumps. After years of blockade, German troops were undernourished, and could not resist temptation. Drunkenness probably caused as much delay as British defensive measures.

Although the Germans had broken through the British lines, it had taken them two days longer than they had expected. The British had sufficient motor vehicles for them to rush troops out of reserve to plug the gaps in the line. By 29 March, the Germans could no longer maintain forward momentum and the British were able to re-establish a defensive line. Allied losses in the fighting amounted to 255,000 dead, wounded and prisoners, plus 1,300 artillery pieces. The Germans lost 239,000.

Engineers attempt to extract a tank from a ditch. Although a tank's tracks helped them to cross the battlefield, they remained vulnerable to deep holes.

SPRING 1918 OFFENSIVE

DATES:	March-June 1918
COMBATANTS:	France, Britain, the United States, Portugal, Belgium and Italy vs Germany
CASUALTIES:	Allies, 537,000; Germany, 509,000
RESULT:	Allied victory

Georgette, in Flanders, meanders to a close

General Erich Ludendorff's second offensive of 1918 was called off on 30 April. The attack, launched on 9 April, attempted to achieve a strategic breakthrough by the German army to the Channel ports.

Ludendorff's offensive, code-named Georgette, was aimed at the key rail junction of Hazebrouck, only 15 miles (24 km) behind the lines. The deepest advance achieved by Operation Michael amounted to 50 miles (80 km). If Hazebrouck fell to the Germans, it was likely that the British would have to evacuate their army from this area. The best opportunity for an important breakthrough offered to Ludendorff was an attack that fell on the Portuguese Corps, the centre of whose line lay at Neuve Chappelle, south-east of Hazebrouck. A secondary attack would strike at Messines Ridge.

The bombardment on 9 April shattered the Portuguese morale and they broke for the rear, where some were fired on by British troops advancing to their support. The Germans kept up the pressure and on 10 April Armentières and Ballieul were captured. Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig's Order of the Day on 11 April contained the famous sentence: "With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end." However, in spite of this rhetoric, the crisis of the battle was still a week away, coming on 17 April when a German attack struck the Belgian Army at Merkem and Kippe, but the Belgians held. A pause in the battle ensued until 25 April, when a fierce bombardment launched the battle for Mount Kemmel. By this stage both sides were exhausted by three weeks of fighting, and the battle petered out in half-hearted offensives. The Allied line had held.

> "WITH OUR BACKS TO THE WALL AND BELIEVING IN THE JUSTICE OF OUR CAUSE, EACH ONE OF US MIGHT FIGHT ON TO THE END"

Soldiers of the Middlesex Regiment man a barricade in the streets of Ballieul, a small town on the border between France and Belgium.

Ludendorff's third try

German officers observe the countryside in the Aisne valley from the Chemin des Dames. The high ground had been fought over in September 1914.

The third German offensive of 1918, unleashed on the Chemin des Dames and Aisne river on 27 May, was called off on 15 June by General Erich Ludendorff. Once again great territorial gains were made, but the Allied line, though stretched, did not break. American troops have entered the fray in substantial numbers for the first time, fighting to halt the Germans at Cantigny, Château-Thierry and Belleau Wood.

The method established in the first two offensives continued in the third. The French suffered worst in this offensive, whereas the first two had been directed against British forces. One corps of British troops, moved out of Flanders for rest, was hit by their second major offensive of the year.

On the first day the German attackers made the longest single-day advance recorded by any combatant army on the Western Front. The retreat continued. The German army pushed the Allied lines back as far as the Marne, before they were halted. Ludendorff had not intended such a signal success, but rather to draw off troops from Flanders or Picardy in order to facilitate his planned offensive there. Such was the success of his advance that he decided to let the battle continue, until on 4 June tiredness and ill-discipline affected the other offensives slowed the attacks. A subsidiary offensive took place in the area between the first and third Ludendorff offensives on 8 June, but this was halted by French counter-attacks.

Having got to within 35 miles (56 km) of Paris, the Germans stopped. Ludendorff intended to regroup, prior to a new offensive in Flanders.

Flooded to defeat

A brief lull on the Italian front in June 1918 preceded an attempt by Austro-Hungarian forces to emulate the success of the Ludendorff offensives on the Western Front. The Austro-Hungarians were forced into the operation by their refusal to offer any more than a few heavy guns to support the German attacks in France. Instead of using their limited resources on a single front, the Austro-Hungarians attacked both in the Asiago and along the Piave on 15 June. Although the Asiago front was a total failure, the Austro-Hungarians made some headway on the Piave. However, the river flooded after a couple of days, and washed away the temporary bridges used to supply the forces across it, so the Austro-Hungarians were forced to withdraw their troops, having lost 150,000 casualties for no gain.

A devastated town on the Italian front, showing the power of artillery bombardment.

Le Hamel, model operation

An attack by British and US 33rd Division troops on the village of Le Hamel on 4 July 1918 achieved some success, spear-headed by 60 tanks. The plan of the British commander, Australian General John Monash, provided a new model for others to learn from. The infantry and tanks were trained beforehand in working together, the artillery support was carefully camouflaged and the bombardment was kept very short. A large proportion of the guns were allocated to firing on enemy artillery and the attack achieved most of its objectives at relatively little cost to the attackers.

Ludendorff fails, Foch succeeds

A German offensive along the Marne was halted by fierce French, British and American resistance. The German attacks on 15 July were east and west of Reims and were preceded by the heaviest artillery barrage yet, but only the latter made any progress at all, crossing the Marne. However, once on the south bank of the Marne the German attackers were unable to go further. The storm troops had suffered heavy losses since March, and were no longer the elite force they had been.

The day after the Germans halted their attacks, Marshal Ferdinand Foch launched the Allied counter-offensive, with troops from France, Britain, America and Italy participating, and supported by 350 tanks. No preparatory bombardment preceded the Allied attack, except for the creeping barrage that opened at 4.35 a.m. With some advantage of surprise, the main French push achieved a 5-mile (9-km) advance on the first day, and by 20 July the Germans withdrew to the heights north of the Ourcq river where they held for a few days, until on the night of 1/2 August they began a second retreat. They were eventually more or less back where they had begun their offensive in the Champagne, north of the Aisne, in June. Here, on 6 August, they halted the Allies. The three weeks of fighting ended with 95,000 French casualties, 13,000 British and 12,000 American, against 168,000 German.

The German offensive carried them beyond the war zone of the trenches into relatively untouched French countryside. Mobile warfare was restored, which was not necessarily to the advantage of the numerically inferior German forces.

A black day for the German army

A column of German prisoners makes its way to camps in the rear. The British victory at Amiens on 8 August 1918 was a huge blow to German hopes of sustaining the war in France.

The British offensive at Amiens on 8 August 1918 achieved gains beyond all expectations as the German army experienced what its commander General Erich Ludendorff described as "a black day for the German army".

As had happened with the German attack on 21 March, fog aided the British as they advanced at zero hour, 4.20 a.m. on 8 August. The fog hid the tanks, which were vulnerable to artillery fire, until the leading elements of the British attack were already into the German defensive line. The British succeeded in creating a 15-mile (24-km) gap, into which they poured men, tanks, cavalry and armoured cars. German soldiers began to surrender in large numbers, causing General Ludendorff to make his remark. When the offensive was halted on 11 August, the Germans had been pushed back up to 10 miles (16 km) in depth. The British suffered 22,200 casualties, the Germans 74,000.

RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR

DATES:	April 1918–November 1920
COMBATANTS:	Bolsheviks vs Whites plus Allied supporters vs nationalists
CASUALTIES:	8 million in total
RESULT:	Bolshevik victory

Tsar shot after civil war breaks out in Russia

The Bolshevik government that took power in Russia in November and brought about peace with Germany now found itself confronted with a growing civil war. After the signing of the peace treaty with Germany, a group of Russian army officers and soldiers gathered along the Don in southern Russia, and started an uprising. At first their forces were small, numbering perhaps 10,000 at most, and their equipment was in short supply. An attempt to capture the town of Ekaterinador in April 1918 failed but the army survived and gathered strength.

The presence of such counter-revolutionary organizations encouraged Russia's former allies to intervene, largely for political reasons. The Czechoslovak Legion, formed by the Russians from Czech and Slovak prisoners captured from the Austro-Hungarian army, joined the opposition to the Bolsheviks in May 1917. They gained control of the Trans-Siberian Railway, and two centres of anti-Bolshevik government emerged at Samara and Omsk. By accident, in June, the Imperial Russian gold reserves fell into their hands.

On 6 July, some of the Bolsheviks' allies, the Left Social Revolutionary Party, staged a revolt. The German ambassador to Moscow was assassinated, and Left Social Revolutionary militia attempted to take control of Moscow. At the same time, a group of former army officers seized the city of Yaroslavl', expecting eventually to be reinforced by French troops due to land at Archangel the same day.

However, the landings never occurred, the Bolshevik forces suppressed the Moscow rebels in a day, and the Yaroslavl' ones by 21 July. Tsar Nicholas II and his family were shot as a consequence of this rebellion during the night of 16/17 July.

> "THE CZECHOSLOVAK LEGION JOINED THE OPPOSITION IN MAY 1917"

Allied armies sent to Russia

After British, Japanese, French and American soldiers and sailors had landed at several ports in Russia on both the Arctic and Pacific coasts, fighting between them and the Bolsheviks broke out during the summer of 1918, increasing the tension between the hostile governments of Russia's former allies and the Bolsheviks.

Japanese forces were the first to intervene, landing at Vladivostok in April after the murder of Japanese nationals. Having been joined by American soldiers and more Japanese in August 1918, they soon began moving along the Trans-Siberian Railway, ostensibly in support of the Czechoslovak Legion, but in fact intent on achieving some measure of Japanese influence in the Russian Far East.

The other major incursion began on 6 March, when British Royal Marines landed at Murmansk, on the Arctic Ocean, to protect the supplies that had been shipped there to sustain Russian participation in the war. In May, the British and French forces in the area skirmished with anti-Bolshevik Finns around Petsamo, and major reinforcements arrived on 23 June. Fighting broke out between the British and the Bolsheviks in July after the Bolsheviks had decided to assert their authority by expelling the foreigners from Russian territory. On 1 August, Archangel was seized by a mixed British and American force, and reinforcements were sent here throughout September to prepare for a more powerful advance south and east.

American troops arrive in Vladivostok, Siberia. The Allied countries sent armies to intervene in the Russian civil war, either to support their wartime friends or to gain territory at the Bolsehvik government's expense.

Allenby's armageddon

British General Sir Edmund Allenby delivered a crushing blow to the Turkish army in Palestine at the Battle of Megiddo, which concluded on 25 September 1918. Allenby had captured Jerusalem in December 1917, whereupon his most experienced troops were withdrawn to the Western Front and he had to spend the spring and summer of 1918 training new, inexperienced divisions. The attack was eventually launched into the Jezreel valley (where the Bible's Book of Revelation predicts the final battle, Armageddon, will be fought) after Allenby had completely deceived the Turks as to where the main stroke would occur. Once the infantry had quickly broken through the Turkish defences, Allenby used his cavalry to push through the gap and swing eastwards toward Beisan intending to cut off the Turkish retreat. After the Turks had been forced to abandon their defences, they were harried by cavalry and aeroplanes during their long retreat into Syria. Australian cavalry entered Damascus on 30 September.

German and Turkish prisoners, in this case a column of 3,000, captured during the battle of Megiddo march toward Ludd, Palestine, in September 1918.

Plan Foch swings into action

Allied forces on the Western Front brought the dour trench conflict to an end, after a series of offensives pushed the Germans steadily back throughout August and September. The Allied Supreme Commander, Marshal Ferdinand Foch, envisaged a steady widening of the offensive from its initial focus in Champagne and around Amiens, until the whole front was in motion. British Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig's aggressive conduct of the campaign has played an important part in bringing Foch's ideas to fruition.

After two years of unimaginative attempts to bludgeon a gap through the German lines, Allied commanders are showing a good deal of imagination. The British combination of guns, tanks and aircraft proved effective in attacks on the old Somme battlefield on 21-23 August and in breaking the formidable Drocourt-Quéant line in September. The Australian Corps secured Mont Saint Quentin using similar methods. General Charles Mangin, who had been characterized as a "butcher" by his men, achieved further success around Compiègne by varying the start time of his attacks. On 12 September, Pershing's American Expeditionary Force began pushing back the great German salient around St Mihiel. By this time the Germans were in general retreat, attempting to retire to a stronger position that they hoped to hold through the winter. But Foch was already preparing his great stroke, under the motto "Tout le monde à la bataille".

German troops in a trench in 1918. The German army continued to fight on, even though it was clear the war was lost.

Assassination plot: Soviet Russia in crisis

An attempted assassination of the Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin coincided with the Bolshevik government being pressed hard by its opponents in the civil war. On 30 August 1918 Lenin was shot by Fanny Kaplan, a former member of the Right Social Revolutionaries, who claimed to be acting entirely alone. Lenin was seriously, but not fatally, wounded. Soviet police uncovered a complex group of plots to overthrow Lenin. British officials had been attempting to bribe the Latvian troops garrisoning Moscow, while French and British diplomats had created an informal network among the Bolsheviks' "White" opponents. At the same time, the Red Army launched its first major offensive which recaptured Kazan from the "Whites" on 10 September. There was heavy fighting around several towns along the Volga river and in the Urals, and both sides desperately tried to mobilize recruits from a peasantry that only wanted peace.

> "OFFICIALS HAD BEEN ATTEMPTING TO BRIBE THE LATVIAN TROOPS"

British troops enter Lille in October 1918, a northern French town that had been occupied by the Germans since 1914. The soldier with the large gun in the foreground is carrying a Lewis Gun, a relatively lightweight machine gun.

The guns fall silent

An armistice came into effect on the Western Front on 11 November 1918, bringing to an end a war that had claimed the lives of millions, and which had been entered into gaily by many young men in 1914.

Marshal Ferdinand Foch's grand offensive, which eventually compelled the Germans to appeal for peace, began in late September. On 26 September, the American First Army attacked in the Argonne region, while French forces attacked between Reims and the American left wing. On 27 September, British forces attacked around Lens, along the River Scarpe; an attack in Flanders followed on the following day. Once these had put the Germans under pressure, General Erich Ludendorff and Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, the German supreme commanders, visited Kaiser Wilhelm II and informed him of the need to seek an armistice.

The worst blow came the next day, when the British Fourth Army broke through the vaunted Hindenburg Line between Bellincourt and Bellenglise. Although the gap was very fragile around Bellincourt, that near Bellenglise was a disaster for the Germans, who did not expect the Hindenburg Line to be breached so convincingly so quickly.

The Kaiser agreed with his generals and appointed a new government that approached the United States on 4 October with a request for an armistice. By 3 November, a revolution had broken out in Germany, starting with the sailors of the German navy at Kiel. On 9 November the Kaiser abdicated and on 11 November, at 5 a.m., the armistice terms were signed in a railway carriage at Compiègne, coming into effect at 11 a.m. that day.

FIRST WORLD WAR MILITARY DEAD BY COUNTRY

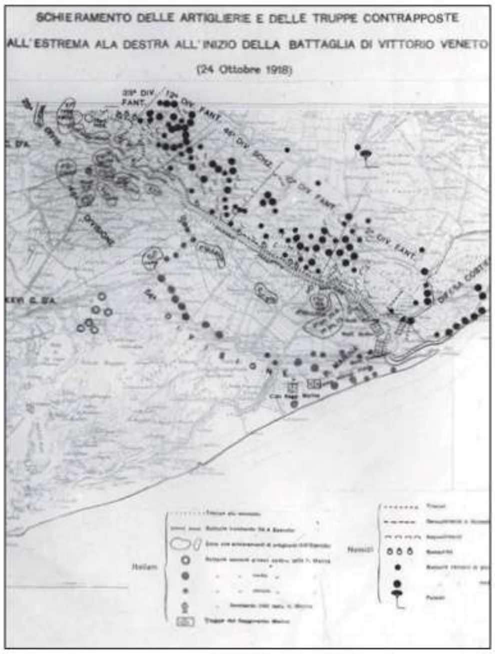
Austria-Hungary	1,200,000
Belgium	13,716
Britain and Empire	898, 402
Bulgaria	87,500
France	1,375,800
Germany	1,773,700
Greece	5,000
Italy	650,000
Japan	300
Montenegro	3,000
Portugal	7,222
Rumania	335,706
Russia	1,700,000
Serbia	450,000
Turkey	325,000
United States	126,000

The Paris Peace Conference that resulted in the Treaty of Versailles began on 18 January 1919 and drew up the treaty governing the peace with Germany. Reparations to the victorious powers, especially France, amounted to £6.6 billion.

Italy avenges Caporetto

On 24 October 1918, the first anniversary of the combined German and Austro-Hungarian offensive at Caporetto, the Italians launched an attack of their own, targeting Austro-Hungarian troops defending Monte Grappa, a mountain that represented a key "hinge" in the front. The mountain had been heavily fought over during the original Caporetto offensive and in Austria-Hungary's June attacks. Its capture would have led to the surrounding of Italian armies defending the Piave line, so it was a key objective of the new Italian offensive. Things didn't work out the way Italian commander, General Armando Diaz, anticipated.

The Austro-Hungarian generals rushed reinforcements to Monte Grappa from their troops on the Piave as the Italian pressure intensified. When the Italian offensive along the Piave opened on 24 October, the attack at Monte Grappa had not achieved its intended objective. The thinning of the Piave defensive line made the crossing easy for the Italian and British troops attacking. Once this line had been broken the Allies made rapid gains and on 1 November they crossed the next major river, the Livenza. The Austro-Hungarians sought an armistice the next day, which was agreed on 3 November, following the Italian seizure of Trieste. The war in Italy formally ended on 4 November.


SCHIERAMENTO DELLE ARTIGLIERIE E DELLE TRUPPE CONTRAPPOSTE
ALL'ESTREMA ALA DESTRA ALL'INIZIO DELLA BATTAGLIA DI VITTORIO VENETO
(24 Ottobre 1918)
Italiani
Nemici

The victorious Italian campaign in the autumn of 1918 recovered all the ground that had been lost after the Austro-Hungarian and German offensive at Caporetto.

Fighting on all fronts

Russia was the setting for fighting between the Bolshevik forces, the "Reds", and their anti-Bolshevik opponents, the "Whites", together with Allied forces, and also nationalists of various peoples who had previously been under the Tsar's rule. Bolshevik Commissar for War, Leon Trotsky, took personal charge of operations on the Volga-Urals front. Samara fell on 8 October, though not before an anti-Bolshevik assembly there established a Directory at Omsk to give political leadership to the White movement on this front. It was ineffective, though, and its war minister, the tsarist admiral, Alexander Kolchak, staged a coup on 18 November and proclaimed himself Supreme Ruler. Though well supported by the British, Kolchak's recruiters were not welcome in Siberia, where people were far enough from Moscow not to notice who ruled them. The Volunteer Army on the Don had far more success, winning control of the Kuban and making a push toward Tsaritsyn on the Volga (later known as Stalingrad).

Meanwhile, the Bolsheviks were on the attack on other fronts. An attempt to evict Allied forces from Murmansk and Archangel, resulted in the Battle of Toulgas, which began the same day that the Armistice came into effect on the Western Front, 11 November. A force of British and American troops held off a Bolshevik attack over three days of fighting. Bolshevik soldiers invaded Estonia on 22 November 1918, where they battled against British and German forces, erstwhile enemies now united against Lenin's regime.

Leon Trotsky addresses troops of the Red Army. Trotsky's ruthless approach and oratorical skills helped organize an army to defend the Bolshevik revolution in Russia.

Greek forces occupy Smyrna

During the First World War, Allied governments had promised the Greek government parts of Turkey if they entered the war on the Allied side. Having eventually done so, the Greeks began to take advantage of those promises in May 1919, with the help of French, British and American ships, by occupying Smyrna, on the Aegean coast of Asia Minor. In 1920, under the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres, the Greeks were given a large area of the hinterland, in addition to Smyrna, which they proceeded to occupy with military forces.

Greek troops with Turkish POWs near the docks of Smyrna. The Greeks hoped to recover the east coast of Asia Minor, which had been dominated by Greek speakers since the 7th century BC.

ANGLO-IRISH WAR

DATES:	1916-1921
COMBATANTS:	Irish Republicans vs Britain
CASUALTIES:	Irish Republicans, 800; Britain, 800
RESULT:	Republican victory

Irish republic goes to war

The shooting of two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary on 21 January 1919 at Soloheadbeg in County Tipperary marked the beginning of a war between irregulars associated with the Irish Republican Army, and the British. On the same day, those Sinn Féin members of the British parliament elected in 1918 assembled at the Mansion House in Dublin as an Irish Parliament, which declared the independence of Ireland from Britain. There were no other incidents in the war until 13 May, when two more constables were killed at Knocklong. When an inquest was held into the killings, the jury blamed the British government for putting the police at risk. After this, any pretence that the Irish Republicans, fighting like Boers in ordinary clothes, were anything other than soldiers, was dismissed by the average Irish subject. A war of ambush and assassination had now begun.

> “WHEN AN INQUEST WAS HELD INTO THE KILLINGS, THE JURY BLAMED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT”

IN BRIEF

Afghan forces attacked British India in May 1919, as the Afghan emir, Amanullah, sought to end British control of his country’s foreign policy as established by treaty in 1881. The British responded by invading through the Khyber Pass and bombing Kabul and Jallalabad. The Afghans quickly asked for a negotiated settlement, which the British agreed and an agreement was signed at Rawalpindi on 8 August 1919, restoring a measure of foreign-policy autonomy to Afghanistan.

WAR CELEBRITY

Lawrence of Arabia
The American journalist Lowell Thomas created a hit with a lecture tour about the seemingly exotic British army intelligence colonel T.E. Lawrence, who has now become known as Lawrence of Arabia.

This former archaeologist, born in 1888, travelled in Syria and the Sinai during the years immediately preceding the war, and subsequently used the knowledge of the Arab people he had gained when he enlisted in the British army andwas assigned to British military intelligence in Cairo.

In 1916, Lawrence was part of a mission that attempted to bribe Turkish officers into allowing British soldiers trapped in Kut to go free. In 1917, Lawrence began serving with Arab irregulars who were fighting the Turks in the hope of securing an independent Arab state, with its capital in Damascus, after the war. Lawrence used these irregulars to attack Turkish railways and other supply lines, during the course of which he allowed Lowell Thomas and his camera-man Harry Chase to film some of his activities.

Thomas used film and lantern slides toillustrate his lectures, which opened at Covent Garden Opera House in August 1919. Eventually, some four million people from several countries saw Thomas's show, turning Lawrence of Arabia into an international celebrity.

A German Freikorps (Volunteer) unit during street fighting against socialists.

Red politics menace Europe

Socialists and communists in many central European countries, inspired by the Bolsheviks of Russia and the uncertain political situation created by defeat in the First World War, attempted to establish revolutionary regimes of their own. The biggest outbreak came in Berlin in January 1919, the Spartacist League attempted to overthrow the Social Democratic government of Friedrich Ebert. This revolt was suppressed by using right-wing militia of former soldiers to re-establish order, in part through the murder of Spartacist leaders. A similar revolt in Bavaria attempted to establish an independent Bavarian Soviet Republic in April 1919, but this too was suppressed in ferocious street fighting in May. The most successful of these revolutions occurred in Hungary, where a Soviet government was formed on 21 March 1919, after the Hungarian president requested the Social Democratic Party to form a government. The new government promptly established a new republic and dismissed the president. However, a coup attempt in June led to mass executions, while the Rumanian army invaded and defeated the Hungarian forces in a battle outside Budapest in August. The soviet leaders fled, and the Rumanians re-established the old republican regime, which lasted until March 1920.

British armoured cars and an aircraft in the mandated territory of Iraq. The British made extensive use of aircraft against the Arab rebels to save the cost of a full-scale occupation.

Revolt in Mesopotamia

The rebellion against the new British mandate over three former areas of the Ottoman empire – given the name Iraq by the British – was finally brought under control in October 1920. The main centre of the rebellion was around Karbala and Ar Ramadi, to the west of Baghdad, which at one point was effectively under Arab control. A second major centre of revolt lay in the north, around Mosul. British operations against the irregular forces of the rebels included the indiscriminate bombing of villages believed to harbour supporters of the Arab nationalist forces, as well as the use of chemical weapons.

> “A SECOND MAJOR CENTRE OF REVOLT LAY IN THE NORTH”

The end of the Whites

White forces have largely been crushed by Bolshevik Reds in Russia's long civil war. The evacuation of White forces from the Crimea on 14 November 1920 marked the end of any serious resistance to the Bolshevik government by supporters of either the old tsarist regime or its successor Provisional Government. Admiral Alexander Kolchak, at one time the Supreme Ruler, was handed over to the Reds in January 1920 by the Czechoslovak Legion, after a coup had toppled him from power. He was shot on 7 February 1920. The Whites and associated Allied forces in northern Russia were withdrawn from Murmansk and Archangel in the same month, and American troops left Siberia with the Czechoslovak Legion in April 1920. Only in the Crimea did the remnants of Denikin's forces and the Volunteer Army hold out, now commanded by General Peter Wrangel. During the Polish-Bolshevik campaigning of 1920, Wrangel launched an attack north, but his forces no longer had the strength to sustain an advance even with the bulk of the Red army engaged elsewhere. After the ceasefire between the Poles and the Bolsheviks, Wrangel was forced back into the Crimea, and eventually his forces were evacuated by the French and British navies.

General Peter Wrangel joined the anti-Bolshevik White movement at its start, but failed in his attempts to make it appealing to the Russian masses, as opposed to the rich and the officers.

British troops on the streets of Dublin. The war was an ugly one of betrayals, bombs, arson and street assassinations often carried out by men not in uniform.

Ireland achieves independence

The treaty establishing the Irish Free State was signed on 6 December 1921. After three years of an unpleasant war of terror versus counter-terror, the Irish Republican Army had withstood every effort of the British administration in Ireland to suppress them, and exhausted the patience of the London government to continue.

The key to the Irish success lay in the intelligence strategy organized by Michael Collins, who used any means he could to get people with access to information about British plans to reveal them to the Irish republicans. Collins's network included members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, eavesdroppers in pubs or restaurants and infiltrators in the Irish administrative apparatus at Dublin Castle. Collins preferred that people gave information voluntarily, but he also used bribery or blackmail to learn about British plans.

The military campaign involved assassinations and raids, targeting the police and the postal services in 1920. By August, the mail in Ireland had virtually come to a standstill.

Collins's greatest success came on 21 November 1920 when twelve members of the "Cairo gang", intelligence specialists brought in from Egypt where they had been successful against nationalist conspirators, were assassinated. Raids were conducted by active service units who conducted hit-and-run ambushes wherever they could isolate small numbers of British soldiers. Most worryingly for the British was the constant growth of the Irish Republican Army – nothing that they tried could halt the enthusiasm the Irish had for independence. The main British response, the Black and Tans, former English soldiers who were recruited into the Royal Irish Constabulary, was simply a terror force intended to intimidate the Irish into submission. The Black and Tans' most notorious reprisal was "Bloody Sunday", when machine guns were used against a crowd watching a football match in November 1920 after the Cairo gang operation – eleven were killed and eleven wounded. At the same time, parts of Cork were burned. The British government accepted the result of the May 1921 parliamentary elections as a sign that the war could not be won, and agreed a ceasefire in July 1921.

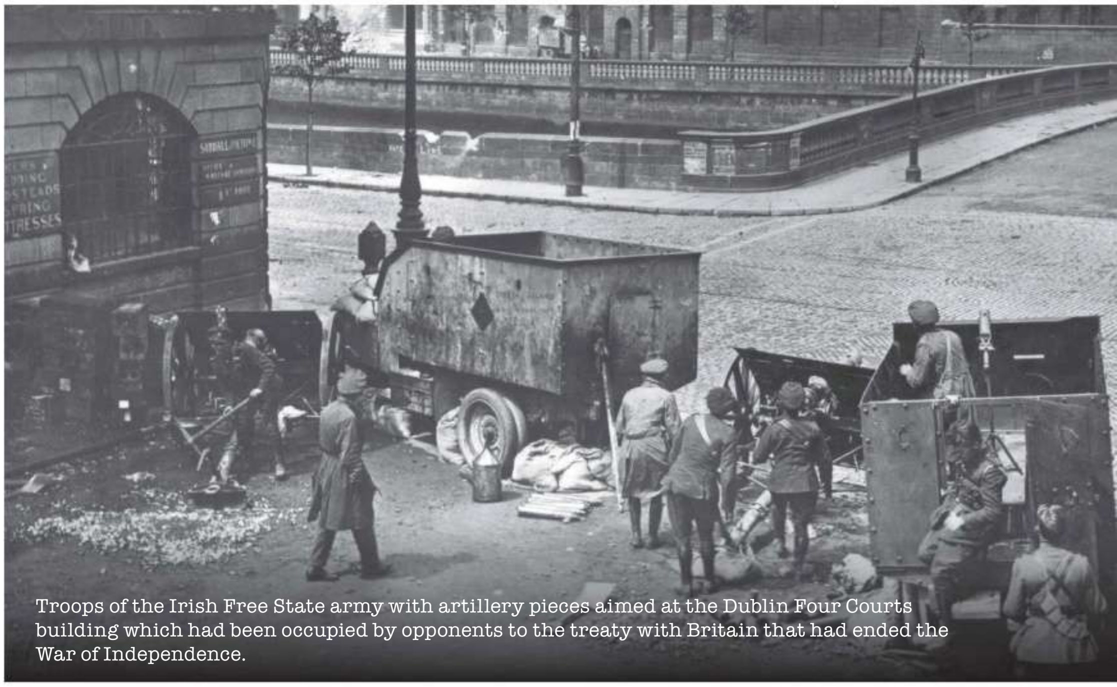
IN BRIEF

- In July 1920, fighting in China between the Japanese-supported Tuan Ch'i-jui and rival warlords led by Ts'ao K'un, ended in a victory for Ts'ao K'un and his associates.
- French troops invading Syria defeated an Arab force at the Battle of Maysalun on 23 July 1920. The Arabs were attempting to create a kingdom ruled by King Faisal, the de facto leader of the First World War's Arab Revolt against the Turks. The French had established an independent Lebanese republic under their protection, which the Arabs did not recognize. The French, in turn, were awarded a League of Nations mandate over Syria, which the Arabs also did not accept.

Warlords fall out again

The military men who dominate China's search for a stable central government have fallen into fighting amongst themselves again after the Washington Naval Conference threatened to hand more power over Shantung's railways to the Japanese, to the outrage of Chinese nationalists. The nationalists demanded the resignation of the government, which was supported by Chang Tso-lin, while Ts'ao K'un and Wu Peifu supported the nationalist position. On 28 April 1922, fighting broke out that ended in the defeat of Chang Tso-lin by Ts'ao K'un, Wu Peifu and their new ally Feng Yü-hsiang. Fighting was much heavier than in 1920, although Wu Peifu's skilful handling of his forces ensured victory for his faction. Chang Tso-lin retreated from Peking to his base in Manchuria, which he now declared to be independent.

> "ON 28 APRIL 1922, FIGHTING BROKE OUT THAT ENDED IN THE DEFEAT OF CHANG TSO-LIN BY TS'AO K'UN, WU PEIFU"



Troops of the Irish Free State army with artillery pieces aimed at the Dublin Four Courts building which had been occupied by opponents to the treaty with Britain that had ended the War of Independence.

A war for thirty-two counties

Conflict between factions of the Irish nationalists, who won dominion status after a two-year conflict against the British, began in June 1922, when anti-treaty republicans seized the Four Courts building in Dublin. The anti-treaty faction opposes the agreement on many grounds, including the loss of six northern counties remaining under British rule, the continued use of a royal seal and oath of loyalty to the British monarch taken by Irish parliamentarians. The British put pressure on the Irish Free State to suppress these irregulars, supplying artillery to the Free State to help. The Four Courts were bombarded and the republicans there surrendered on 30 June, while fighting went on in the rest of Dublin until the new Irish National Army drove them out.

OBITUARY

Erich von Falkenhayn (1861-1922)

Erich von Falkenhayn died in Potsdam on 8 April 1922. He was 60.

Von Falkenhayn joined the German army and participated in the Boxer Rebellion. In 1913, he was appointed Prussian Minister of War. After the failure of the German attack in France in September 1914, von Falkenhayn was appointed Chief of the German General Staff, in effect commander-in-chief.

Von Falkenhayn believed the War required a new tactical approach, one which emphasized the use of artillery, and defensive measures generally. Offensive action was only intended to create situations in which the enemy was forced to counter-attack, exposing themselves to the German guns. Verdun, the battle of attrition he launched against the French in February 1916, was intended to be a model of this, but his commanders in the field misunderstood his wishes and mishandled the battle, causing far heavier German casualties than von Falkenhayn had anticipated.

He was removed from his post in August 1916, and afterwards served in the Balkans in the Near East and on the Eastern Front before he retired in 1919.

Atrocities follow Turkish victory over Greeks

Greek forces were driven out of Asia Minor in disorder in September 1922 after their defeat at the hands of Turkish nationalists. The Greeks had been awarded Smyrna and an area of the hinterland around the port under the Treaty of Sèvres, signed in August 1920, by the representatives of the Ottoman sultan. The sultan's rule was at an end, though, as Turkish nationalist republicans assembled in Ankara and rejected the treaty, as well as setting up a government of their own. The Greek government believed that an attack toward Ankara would destroy the republican movement and allow the treaty to take effect, so at the end of March 1921 a Greek army began marching inland from Smyrna, initially forcing the Turks to retreat. However, the Turkish commander, Mustapha Kemal, who had made his military reputation during the Dardanelles campaign and also fighting the Russians in the Caucasus during the First World War, waited until the Greeks were at the end of a long supply line which could be attacked by irregular forces, then blocked the Greek advance some 60 miles (96 km) from Ankara, at the Sakharia river. On 23 August the Greeks attacked and suffered heavy casualties as they were defeated, forcing them to retreat on 13 September 1921 to a position closer to Smyrna. Mustapha Kemal waited a year to strengthen his army before attacking the Greeks on 26 August at Afyonkarahisar. On the second day of the battle, the Greeks broke and fled back to Smyrna, where they were evacuated in chaos. The Turks arrived on 9 September 1922 and burnt large parts of the town, killing most of the Greek population who had lived there for centuries, while the small number of survivors of the massacre fled.

Smyrna burns as the Turks reoccupy it in 1922. The Greeks of Asia Minor were mostly killed or evicted in the closing stages of the Greco-Turkish war.

The IRA puts down its arms

Civil war in Ireland finally came to an end on 24 May 1923, when the leaders of the Irish Republican Army ordered their men to put down their arms and return to their homes.

The IRA had begun its war in Dublin in June 1922. Defeated there, the republicans continued the fight largely in the south and west of Ireland, using guerrilla tactics of hit and run which had proved successful against the British. Their most successful coup was perhaps the killing of Michael Collins, mastermind of the war against the British, in an ambush in Cork on 22 August 1922.

However, what had worked against an occupying power failed against the provisional Irish Free State government. The government's ferocious policy of executing many republicans captured with arms was answered by republican assassinations of parliamentarians who had voted in favour of the law.

The majority of Irish people were tired of war, having just survived the three-year conflict with the British, and were happy with the partial independence they had received, and the republicans found little of the support that had been crucial to their success in the war against the British. At least 3,000 Irish lost their lives in the war.

> “THE IRA HAD BEGUN ITS WARIN DUBLIN IN JUNE 1922. DEFEATED THERE, THE REPUBLICANS CONTINUED THE FIGHT LARGELY IN THE SOUTH AND WEST OF IRELAND, USING GUERRILLA TACTICS OF HIT AND RUN WHICH HAD PROVED SUCCESSFUL AGAINST THE BRITISH”

Chinese warlords agree to Nationalist rule

Chiang Kai-shek established a national authority over all of China for the first time since 1917, when his government was recognized by China's warlords in October 1928.

The delicate balance established at the end of 1924 between the various warlords and claimants to national authority over China was upset by the death in 1925 of the Nationalist leader, Sun Yat-sen. On 22 November 1925, war broke out between Feng Yü-hsiang and the master of Manchuria, Chang Tso-lin. Wu Peifu, the former northern faction leader now based in Hupei province in the centre of the country, joined with Chang to defeat Feng. Feng had been receiving aid from the Soviet Union, which was at the same time supplying the Nationalist forces. Feng and the Nationalists now combined against the common enemy, the Chang-Wu faction. Once the Nationalists had built up their army, they launched the Northern Expedition from Canton in July 1926. The advancing armies rapidly gained control of all of southern China, including, by March 1927, the great port of Shanghai, as well as key cities such as Hankow and Nanking. However, at this point, Chiang Kai-shek, who had replaced Sun as leader of the Nationalists, broke with the Soviet Union. He now confronted all the rival warlords, including Feng, Chang and Wu. The advance on Peking resumed in March 1928, and after some see-saw fighting to the east, Chang admitted defeat and withdrew back to his Manchurian base. Chang was assassinated by the Japanese in June, and in October, Chiang established his Nationalist government, which brought the twisting tale of Chinese civil wars to an end.

> “THE ADVANCE ON PEKING RESUMED IN MARCH 1928, AND AFTER SOME SEE-SAW FIGHTING TO THE EAST, CHANG ADMITTED DEFEAT AND WITHDREW BACK TO HIS MANCHURIAN BASE”

A Chinese man faces execution at the hands of soldiers belonging to one of the Warlord armies that have divided China.

OBITUARY

The First Earl Haig (1861–1928)

Field Marshal Earl Douglas Haig, the commander of the British Expeditionary Force in France during 1916–18 died on 28 February 1928, aged 66.

Haig was a member of the famous whiskey distilling family of the same name. He served with Kitchener in the Sudan in 1898, and in the Boer War. When war broke out in August 1914, he became commander of the British Expeditionary Force's I Corps. During 1915, he campaigned against his commander, Field Marshal Sir John French, continuing as commander of the force, and sought to replace him. In December 1915, French was removed and Haig became commander.

Haig's term as commander was marked both by disaster and victory. The heavy casualties experienced by the British on the Western Front under his command overshadowed his willingness to innovate and learn from his experiences. He kept the pressure on the German army throughout 1916 and 1917, and deserves some credit for using the tank and for developing the excellent gunnery capability of his army.

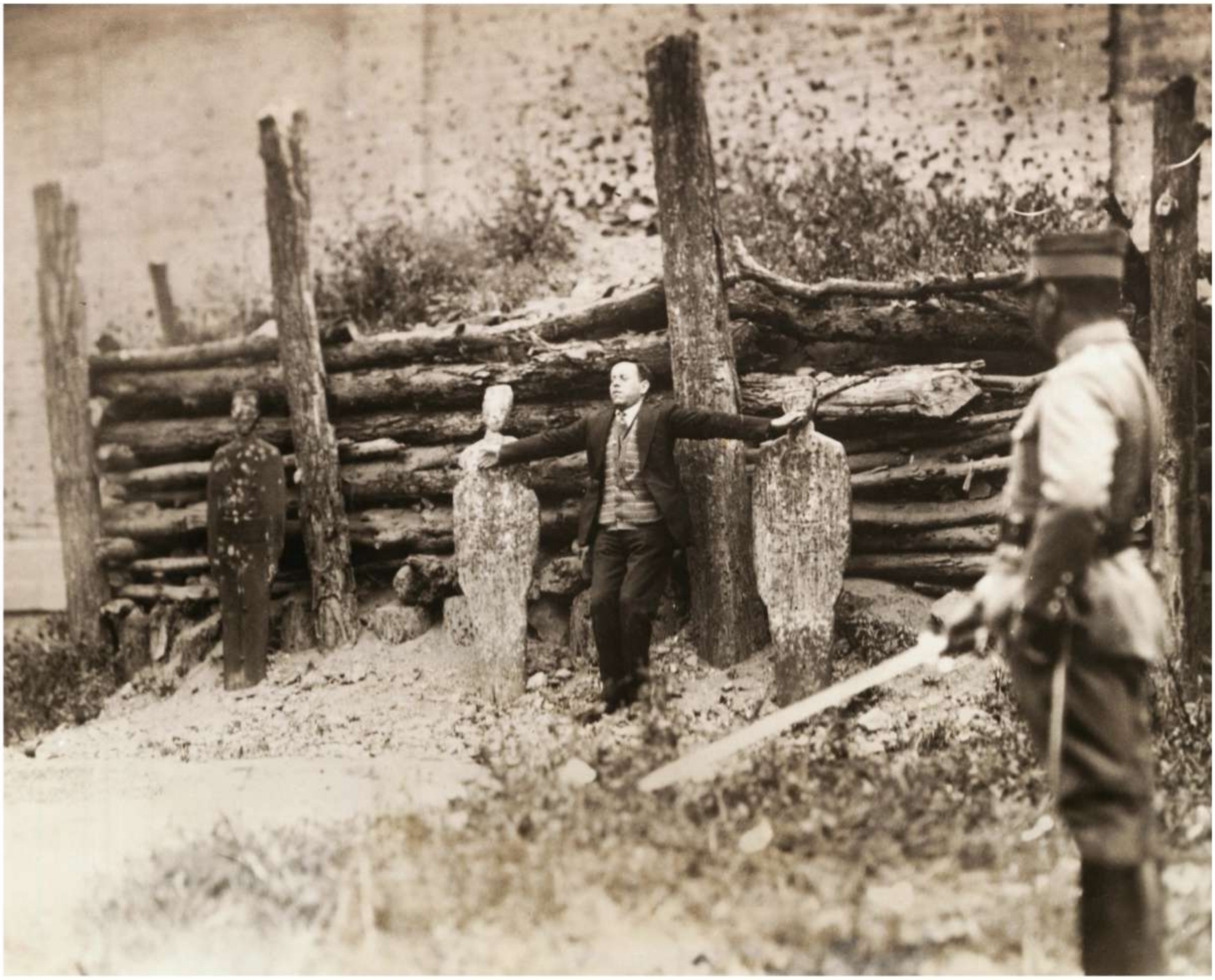
After the war, he worked hard to raise funds for ex-servicemen in need and many of his former soldiers mourn his passing. He is survived by his wife, three daughters and one son.

Viva Cristo el Rey

A negotiated settlement brokered by the American ambassador to Mexico, Dwight Whitney Morrow, brought to an end the three-year uprising against anti-clerical laws in Mexico on 21 June 1929.

The Cristero Revolt was a reaction to laws signed by Mexican President Plutarco Elías Calles in June 1926 that imposed penalties on priests for speaking against the revolutionary government of Mexico. Initially, the Catholic Church organized boycotts, suspended religious services and lobbied for the amendment of the Mexican constitution to remove its anti-clerical articles. On 3 August, however, a shootout took place between Mexican soldiers and Catholics who had barricaded themselves in a church in Guadalajara. In September, several individual groups of landowners and civic officials declared themselves to be in rebellion, while a group organized by the Mexican Association of Catholic Youth did the same on 1 January 1927.

The rebellion was focused in the states of Jalisco, Michoacán, Colima, Guanajuato and Zacatecas, and featured a range of curious characters including two priests who proved to be natural soldiers, and a cynical mercenary who was hired to command the "Cristero" forces. The fighting was largely between small bands of rebels using guerrilla tactics and the army or local militia, but occasionally the Cristeros would gather in larger forces to take on units of the army. In spite of having inferior weapons, the Cristeros achieved some success and by 1929 the rebellion appeared irrepressible, although not strong enough to defeat the government. However, sympathizers emerged in the army, and the government, now led by President Emilio Portes Gil, recognized the danger and began negotiations.



The Blessed Father Miguel Pro, a Jesuit priest, spreads his arms at the moment of his execution in November 1927. The Cristero War pitted traditionalist Mexicans against a government determined to create a secular republic.

Red Army victory in Manchuria

The Soviet Union has defeated China in a war that showed the Red Army to be an efficient fighting force. On 26 November 1929, the day before Harbin fell to the Red Army, in Manchuria, against the wishes of the Nationalist government in Peking, opened negotiations with the Soviet Union to end the war.

The war had ostensibly begun over the arrest of some Soviet consulate staff and visitors to the consulate at Harbin, Manchuria, on 27 May 1929. However, the real cause of the war was control of the Chinese Eastern Railway, a tsarist-era construction that the Soviet Union sought to retain, and which the Chinese Nationalist government wanted to bring under its control.

Negotiations ended when diplomatic relations were broken off on 16 August. The Soviets sent 100,000 of its best troops to various points along the Manchurian-Soviet border, while the Chinese warlord in control of the area, Chang Hsüeh-liang, mobilized his well-equipped forces, which included remnants of the White Russian Siberian army that fought the Soviet regime in the civil war. Soviet troops had already crossed the border on 12 August, seeking advantageous positions around key border cities such as Blagoverschensk and Manchouli, and fighting broke out around the latter city.

No major actions then occurred until 10 October when the Chinese floated mines down the Sungari river into the major trade artery of the Amur river, and also shelled Soviet shipping near Lahasusu, close to where the Sungari meets the Amur. Two days later the Red Army crossed the border in force and laid siege to Dongjiang and Lahasusu. A month later they launched a major assault on Manchouli, and destroyed one of the best Chinese units at Chalainor.

General Chang Hsüeh-liang (centre) fought the Soviet Union for control of the Chinese Eastern Railway, which ran through his fief of Manchuria.

WAR CELEBRITY

Erich Paul Remark

Erich Paul Remark served in the front lines on the Western Front during the Great War. He had been drafted into the German army in 1916, aged 18, and after basic training went into action in June 1917. He was badly wounded by British shelling in November and spent the next ten months in hospital or convalescing. Returned to the army for garrison duties in October 1918, the war ended before he could be sent back to the front, and Remark resumed his studies for a teaching career.

In 1920, however, he published his first novel, and eventually found work in magazine publishing. In 1928, a novel based on his war experiences, Im Westen nichts Neues, was serialized in a magazine. Based on its popularity, it was published in book form in 1929, and sold a million copies in its first year in Germany. Translations published abroad sold another million, and a Hollywood film taking the book's English title, All Quiet on the Western Front, was released in April 1930. The film won the best film and best director Academy Awards.

Japanese seize three Manchurian provinces

The Kwantung Army, Japan's main military force in China, ended its offensive against Chinese forces in the north-east when it captured Harbin on 28 January 1932 at the request of the government in Tokyo. The three eastern provinces of Manchuria are now in Japanese hands.

The "Manchurian Incident" began on 18 September 1931 when a Japanese officer detonated explosives, damaging the train track near Beidaying, where 7,000 soldiers of Chinese warlord Chang Hsüeh-liang's army were stationed. The damage was superficial and a train successfully negotiated that part of the track moments after the explosions, as observed by a Japanese patrol from the Kwantung Army, stationed along the railway, which was controlled by a Japanese company. Fighting broke out between Japanese forces and the Chinese at Beidaying near Mukden.

Although only a small group of Japanese officers plotted the bombing, they relied on the fact that after fighting broke out the rest of the Kwantung Army would respond in self-defence to reports of attack by Chinese forces. Reinforcements arrived from Korea, and troops across Manchuria carried out a pre-determined offensive. The Chinese, however, were under instructions from the Nationalist government in Nanking not to resist. Where fighting did occur, it arose in situations where word did not get through to Chinese forces, or where their officers chose not to obey the command. Consequently, the Japanese easily conquered the provinces of Heilongjiang, Chilin and Liaoning.

Japanese mounted infantry in a Chinese city. The Japanese found the conquest of Manchuria an easy task, after Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek opted to avoid battle and rely on diplomacy to restore Chinese control in the end.

The bloody war for a desert

Wrecked Bolivian tanks in the Chaco region. The Bolivian government spent a substantial amount of money in its efforts to conquer the inhospitable Chaco in belief that substantial amounts of oil could be found.

The ceasefire agreed between Bolivia and Paraguay on 14 June 1935 has halted a three-year war over the Gran Chaco, an arid region between Bolivia and Paraguay valued by the latter for its crop of mate tea leaves, but thought by the former to contain a substantial quantity of oil. This potential drew the interest of the powerful Standard Oil Company of the United States, as well as the nation of Argentina, both of which have given assistance to the combatants.

Skirmishes between the two countries over control of the Gran Chaco had been going on since 1927. A pre-emptive attack was made by Paraguayan forces in September 1932. The target of the attack was a fort named Boqueron, which was besieged and surrendered on 29 September 1932. The Bolivian army was badly weakened by the defeat, losing many of its most experienced troops. In January 1933, the conscripts drafted by the Bolivians after Boqueron went into action at Nanawa, a small fort held by Paraguay near the Pilcomayo river. The Bolivians came close to success, but after five days of fighting gave up their attacks and settled for trench warfare. Skirmishing went on for months until a second assault on 5-6 July, including the exploding of an underground mine (that was 98 feet (30m) short of the enemy positions) and the use of tanks, failed. On 11 July a Paraguayan counter-attack drove the Bolivians out of their trenches and ended the siege of Nanawa.

After the victories at Boqueron and Nanawa, the Paraguayans went on the offensive, having constructed several roads through the Chaco in order to bring precious water more easily to the men at the front. At the beginning of December, Paraguayan forces slipped around the Bolivian flanks at Campo Via, and on 11 December two Bolivian divisions surrendered. When the offensive ended on 19 December, the Paraguayans had occupied about half the Chaco.

Paraguayan successes continued through 1934, and only in 1935 did the Bolivians halt their advance. Both of these poor countries could ill afford to fight such a war, which cost the lives of 100,000 soldiers.

Italians conquer Ethiopia

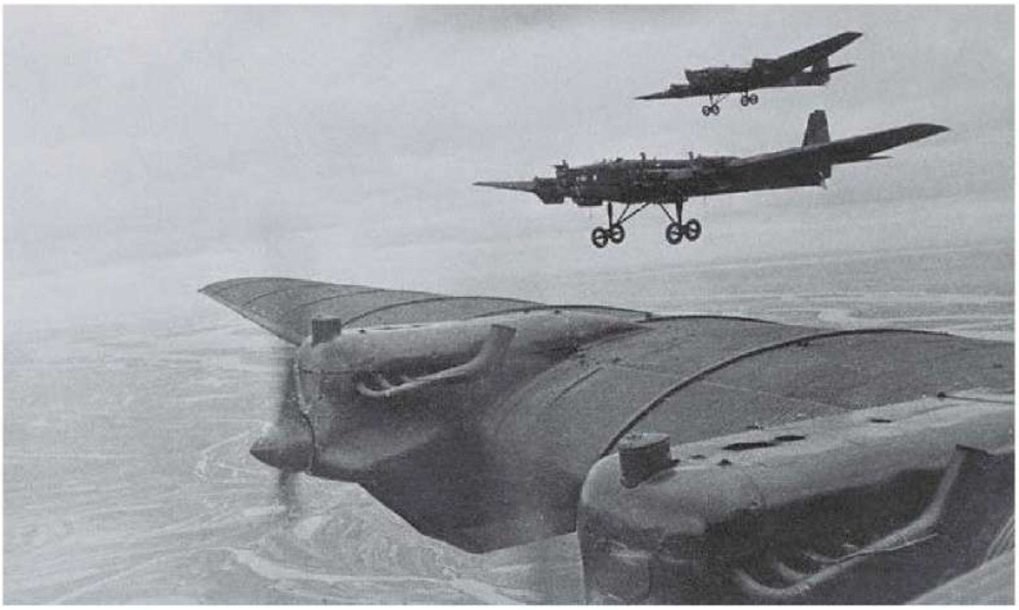
On 9 May 1936, Italian king Vittorio Emmanuel III was proclaimed emperor of Ethiopia in a ceremony that marked the annexation of one of the two remaining independent African states to European empires. The war had pitted the aircraft and armour of the Italians against the technologically inferior Ethiopian army, which had little chance, especially after the Italians deployed gas.

A dispute between the two countries had arisen in 1934, over the oasis at Walwal in the Ogaden. In December, skirmishes resulted in 200 casualties in total between the two sides, and the matter came before the League of Nations in Geneva. In September 1935, the League refused to declare either party guilty of provoking the conflict. Italian dictator Benito Mussolini at this point decided to risk League sanctions, and sent massive reinforcements to the Italian colony of Eritrea, to the north of Ethiopia.

In October, the Italians invaded. Their advance was slow, but the hapless Ethiopian army had no answer to the machine guns and heavy artillery of the Italians, let alone more advanced weapons, and Ethiopian assaults were fruitless. Addis Ababa was occupied on 5 May 1936, three days after Haile Selassie fled into exile. League sanctions proved inadequate to halt Mussolini, who in any case was being courted by the French and British governments fearing the rise of German military power under Adolf Hitler.

Italian tankettes and infantry on the advance in Ethiopia.

Red Army bloodies Japanese noses



Soviet strategic bombers in flight. The disputed Soviet–Korean border triggered the clash between Japan and the Soviet Union in 1938.

A division-sized battle between the Soviet Red Army and the Japanese Kwantung army ended in a decisive victory for the former when the Japanese requested an end to hostilities on 10 August 1938. The Japanese attacked Soviet forces on the Shachofeng and Changkufeng heights near the Soviet-Korean border. The Red Army reinforced the defenders with tanks and mechanized units, and both sides used aircraft. Eventually the Japanese were repelled. Although the Japanese withdrew, after suffering 1,200 casualties, the Red Army had suffered comparable losses.

> “THE JAPANESE ATTACKED SOVIET FORCES ON THE CHANGKUFENG HEIGHTS”

OBITUARY

Erich Ludendorff (1865-1937)

General Erich Ludendorff, the mastermind of many German offensives during the First World War, has died in Bavaria at the age of 72.

Ludendorff had been an efficient staff officer in the pre-war German army, and played a key role on both the Western and Eastern Fronts in August and September 1914. The tremendous German successes on the Eastern Front in 1915, combined with failures in the West in 1916, to see Ludendorff and General Paul von Hindenburg put in supreme command in August 1916. Germany knocked Russia out of the war in 1917, then Ludendorff organized the major German offensives of spring 1918 which, in the absence of American reinforcements, might have forced Britain or France to negotiate.

After the war, Ludendorff promoted the idea that the German army was “stabbed in the back” by the politicians at home, and could still have fought the Allies to a standstill in 1918. In 1923 he participated in the attempt to overthrow the German government by the National Socialist German Workers Party, and served as a deputy in the Reichstag, as well as running for president against von Hindenburg. He retired from public life in 1928.

> “LUDENDORFF PROMOTED THE IDEA THAT THE GERMAN ARMY WAS “STABBED IN THE BACK” BY THE POLITICIANS AT HOME”

The Civil War in Spain

The army uprising of 18 July 1936 marked the visible challenge to constitutional government in Spain by those rejecting the results of the February election. However, the plotting had begun in the days after the vote was held on 16 February, and received serious impetus when the President of the Spanish republic, Niceto Alcalá Zamora, was removed from office by the parliament. Alcalá Zamora had been removed quite legitimately by the letter of the constitution, but in conjunction with other policies of the leftist majority, it looked to conservatives as if the intention was to overthrow the constitutional order and institute a Soviet regime in Spain.

Members of the XV International Brigade on parade in a Spanish town. The XV brigade included volunteers from Britain, the Balkans, Belgium, France and the United States.

The leading conspirator was General José Sanjurjo Sacanell, and the murder of José Calvo Sotelo, a conservative, on 13 July led him to put his plans into effect. Rebellions occurred across Spain, including the key cities of Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Cádiz, Jerez de la Frontera, Córdoba, Zaragoza and Oviedo, but the uprisings in Madrid and Barcelona failed. The fighting at Barcelona was the heaviest of the day where paramilitary police and armed workers' militia defeated an attempt to seize the city. Similarly, in Madrid, armed workers combined with loyal artillery and air force units to overcome the rebels, who had taken refuge in the main barracks. However, the rebels ended up controlling a vast swathe of northern Spain and the south-western corner of Andalucia. Isolated outposts of rebel control were at Granada and in the Alcázar of Toledo.

Both sides were ruthless in the slaughter of their opponents. The Nationalists, as the rebels became known, were particularly thorough in settling old scores with leftists in the regions under their control, but in loyalist Spain workers pillaged convents, monasteries and churches, even to the point of tipping the bodies of the dead out into the street. Many priests were killed, but so were civilians of conservative political views, regardless of whether they were rich or poor.

Rebels on the march

The initial phase of the war saw the rebels trying to expand the area under their control, while the government attempted to organize its scattered forces into a coherent army capable of halting the advancing enemy. A substantial portion of the Army of Africa was ferried over the Strait of Gibraltar in German and Italian aircraft loaned to the rebels by the sympathetic leaders of those dictatorships. Ships also carried reinforcements, and soon rebel columns were advancing from Seville, approaching Madrid from the west. On 28 September, the garrison of the Alcazar was relieved when Toledo, on one of the main roads from the south to Madrid, was captured by the Nationalists.

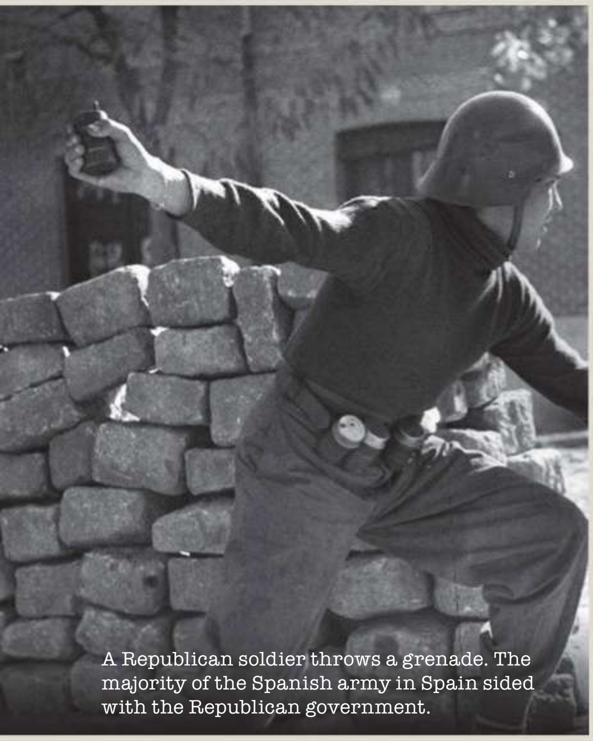
Meanwhile, in the north, the rebels sought to capture the towns of San Sebastian and Irún. The intent was to seal off the border here from France, which would prevent arms reaching the one area in the north still in loyal hands, the Basque country. On 13 September, San Sebastian fell to the Nationalists.

The Nationalists' "final assault" on Madrid began on 7 October 1936. Nationalist commanders expected the same easy victories over Republican militia that had been won since July. In fact, the Republicans had learned from their mistakes – this time militia units did not retreat at the first bombardment or assault and slowed the rebel advance. Once arms from the Soviet Union, especially tanks and aircraft, began to reach the front in some quantity, the tide began to turn. It took a major assault in November, using all the resources the Nationalists could spare from all fronts, to reach the suburbs of Madrid, and even here the Republicans' stout defence prevented the fall of the city.

Army of Africa

In spite of their apparent success, gaining control of half the country, the Nationalists' owed everything to the support they had received from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. The Army of Africa had been crucial in gaining control of the south-west, and the rebels would probably have found it impossible to transport them without

The ruins of Guernica. The Basque town was bombed in April 1937 by German aircraft with the intention of destroying the town completely.



A Republican soldier throws a grenade. The majority of the Spanish army in Spain sided with the Republican government.

German and Italian aircraft. By contrast the Republicans quickly found themselves the victim of an arms boycott that was intended to affect both sides, but in fact only worked against the Republic. Only the Soviet Union was willing to give them arms and charged a high price for them. Supporters of the Republic from abroad were more readily available, and the International Brigades were key shock troops in 1936-37, until casualties took their toll on the units' effectiveness.

"Volunteers" from Germany and Italy also joined the rebels, although many were military personnel under orders. The Italian dictator Mussolini was particularly keen to see Italians play an important role in a rebel victory, and virtually forced the rebel leader, General Francisco Franco y Bahamonde, to use them in an attack toward Guadalajara. The Italians were badly beaten in this battle, in March 1937, following an earlier rebel defeat in the Jarama valley, in February. With more and more Soviet arms reaching the Republic, and the rebels apparently stalemated, it looked as if the government was likely to win the war.

Franco shifted his strategy to conquering those industrial cities of the north that still held out for the Republic. Chief among them was Bilbao, capital of the Basque region. The rebels' plans for a post-war Spain did not concede the degree of autonomy that the Basques, who linguistically were not Spanish-speaking, had gained from the Republic. Hence, in spite of their moderate politics and Catholic faith, they were staunch Republicans. On 26 April 1937, the Condor Legion, Franco's German air force, bombed the Basque town of Guernica, virtually obliterating it, in the hope of intimidating the Basques. The gesture had the opposite effect and Bilbao did not fall until July, largely owing to the superior artillery and air power of the rebels. Santander, another important northern city, fell to the rebels in August.

Republican attacks

By the summer of 1937, the Republicans had finally trained a large enough army to attack the rebels. The results in two offensives were the same, as officers' inexperience hampered initial successes, and gains were quickly reversed by the arrival of rebel reinforcements. A desperate winter battle for Teruel ended with little actual change in the front, although the town changed hands twice.

By the spring of 1938, the tide of battle was now running definitely in favour of the rebels. The last gamble of the Republic came in the fierce battle of the Ebro, from 24 July to 18 November. At this stage, the Republicans' one hope was to hang on long enough for the war between Germany and Britain and France that seemed inevitable. They would surely then receive the aid needed to defeat the rebels. The offensive had as much a political objective in demonstrating the continued viability of the Republican war effort as a military operation, designed to reverse the steady rebel advance. However, the attacks ended in failure, as Franco reinforced the threatened areas and then recovered all the lost ground. Barcelona fell to the rebels on 26 January 1939 and Madrid surrendered on 28 March, bringing the war to an end.

> "THE TIDE OF BATTLE WAS NOW RUNNING DEFINITELY IN FAVOUR OF THE REBELS. THE LAST GAMBLE OF THE REPUBLIC CAME IN THE FIERCE BATTLE OF THE EBRO"

General von Richthofen directs the gaze of a German observation post. He was commander of the Condor Legion, the German air and tank force sent to Spain to fight with the Nationalists.

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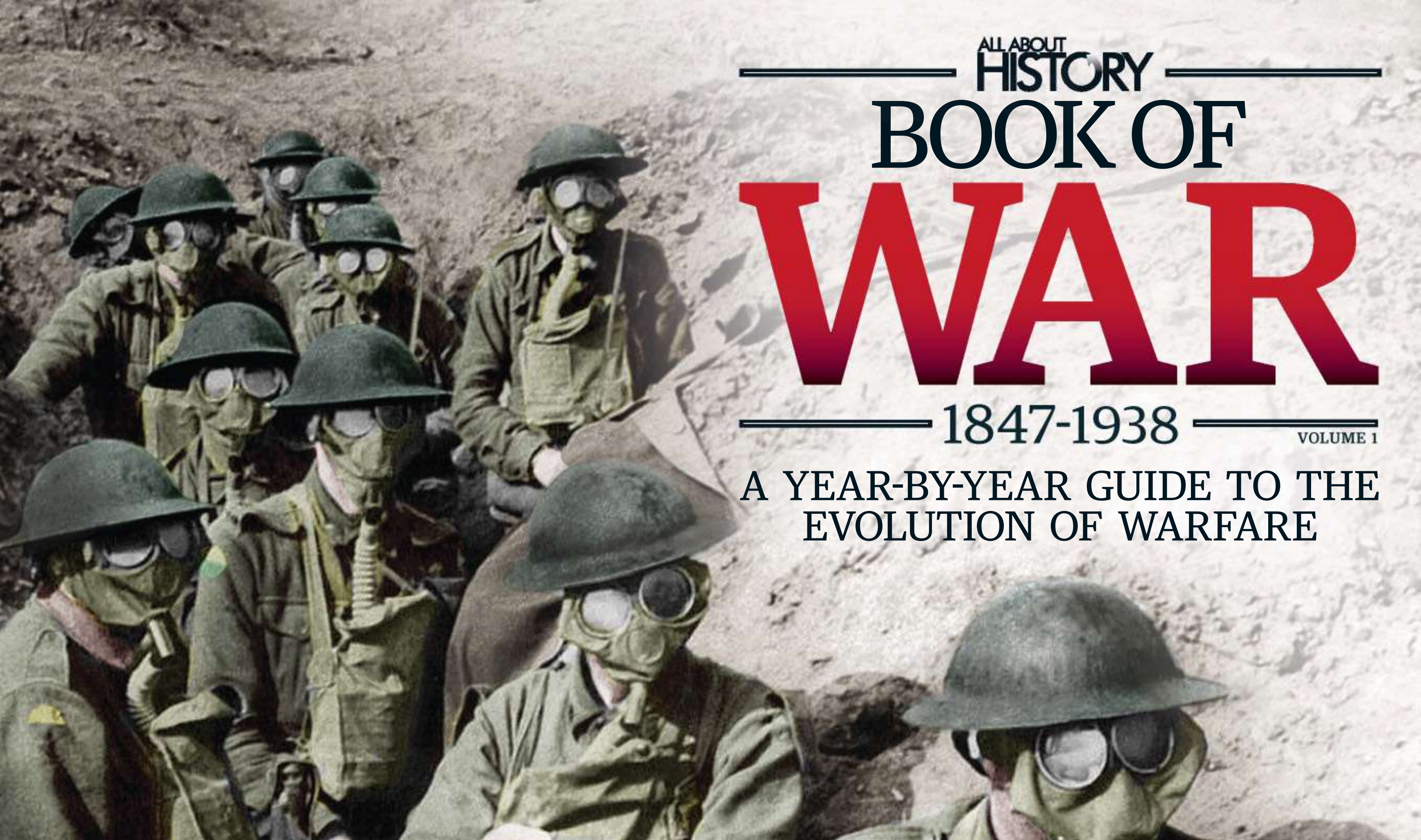

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